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THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(AUTHORISED EDITION),

FOURTH SERIES

SECOND SESSION OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT
OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

7 EDWARD VII.

VOLUME CLXXVII.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM THURSDAY, TWENTY-SEVENTH DAY
OF JUNE, 1907, TO WEDNESDAY, TENTH DAY OF JULY, 1907.

NINTH VOLUME OF SESSION.

1907.

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CHRONOLOGY OF "THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES."

THE PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY contains all that can be collected of the Legislative History of this country from the Conquest to the close of the XVIIIth Century (1803), 36 vols. The chief sources whence these Debates are derived are the Constitutional History, 24 vols.; Sir Simonds D'Ewes' Journal; Debates of the Commons in 1620 and 1621; Chandler and Timberland's Debates, 22 vols.; Grey's Debates of the Commons, from 1667 to 1694, 10 vols.; Almon's Debates, 24 vols.; Debrett's Debates, 63 vols.; The Hardwicke Papers; Debates in Parliament by Dr. Johnson, &c., &c.

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Amendment moved—

"In page 6, line 28, after the word 'removed' to insert the words 'Provided as follows:—(*a*) It shall not be lawful for the corporation to expend money (except through a contractor) upon the provision of the labour and materials required for the wiring for and fixing of electric light fittings upon the premises of their consumers or prospective consumers, or upon the provision of lamps, fuzes, switches, fittings, lampholders, and other apparatus and things for lighting purposes; but nothing in this subsection shall prevent the corporation completing the service line between their supply mains and their own apparatus upon the premises of any such consumer. (*b*) The corporation shall so adjust the rents and charges to be made by them for electric light fittings and for the wiring in connection therewith as to meet any expenditure by them under the powers of this section in connection therewith (including interest upon any moneys borrowed for those purposes and all sums applied either by way of instalments or by way of payments to sinking fund for repayment of moneys so borrowed).'"—(*Lord Avebury.*)

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COLONIES: ANNUAL.—

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The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Great Yarmouth Port and Haven Bill; Taff Vale Railway Bill.—Lords' Amendments considered, and agreed to 64

Central London Railway Bill—Read the third time, and passed 64

Southend Water Bill [LORDS].—As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time 64

Ladybank Sewerage, Drainage and Water Provisional Order Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11) Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 64

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 14) Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time To-morrow 64

Canal Tolls and Charges (New Junction Canal) Order Confirmation Bill [LORDS].—Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Order confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time To-morrow 64

Kendal Corporation Bill [LORDS]; Heywood and Middleton Water Board Bill [Lords]; Wisbech Water Bill [Lords]; Burnham (Somerset) Pier Bill [Lords].—Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 64

GENERAL ACCIDENT, FIRE, AND LIFE ASSURANCE CORPORATION, LIMITED [LORDS].—Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time 64

OCEAN ACCIDENT AND GUARANTEE CORPORATION [LORDS].—Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time 64

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP J).—Major SEELY reported from the Committee on Group J. of Private Bills; That Mr. Duffy, one of the Members of the Committee, was not present during the sitting of the Committee this day.

Report to lie upon the Table 65

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP J).—Major SEELY reported from the Committee on Group J. of Private Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned until Monday next, at half-past Eleven o'clock.

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Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 13) Bill.—Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill, as amended, to be considered To-morrow 65

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP G).—Sir HENRY KIMBER reported from the Committee on Group G. of Private Bills; That Mr. Fullerton, one of the Members of the said Committee, was not present during the sitting of the Committee this day.

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MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.—That they have agreed to:—Amendments to— Sutton Coldfield Rectory Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer further powers on the Colne Balley Water Company for the raising of capital; and for other purposes." [Colne Valley Water Bill [Lords.]] 65

Colne Valley Water Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 65

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION (SPECIAL RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION BILL).—Two Petitions from Newton-in-Makerfield, against; to lie upon the Table 65

PAUPER LUNATICS (COST OF MAINTENANCE).—Petitions for legislation: From Alston with Garrigill; and, Isle of Wight; to lie upon the Table 66

SMALL LANDHOLDERS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Inverness, for alteration; to lie upon the Table 66

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MERCHANT SHIPPING (TONNAGE DEDUCTION FOR PROPELLING POWER) BILL.—Petition from the Dublin Port and Docks Board, against alterations, praying to be heard by counsel; referred to the Select Committee on the Bill .. 66

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ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACTS, 1882 TO 1902 (PROCEEDINGS).—Copy presented, of Report by the Board of Trade respecting the Applications to and Proceedings of the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 to 1902, during the past year [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 223] 66

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT.—Return presented, relative thereto [Address 17th June; *Mr. Lloyd Morgan*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 224] 66

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3842 and 3843 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 66

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Colonial Reports (Annual).—Copy presented, of Report No. 526 (St. Helena, Annual Report for 1906) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 66

Paper Laid Upon the Table by the Clerk of the House.—Lunacy. Copy of Sixty-first Report of the Commissioners in Lunacy to the Lord Chancellor [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 225] 67

Prosecution of Offences Acts, 1879 and 1884.—Address for "Return showing the working of the regulations made in 1886 for carrying out the Prosecution of Offences Acts, 1879 and 1884, with statistics setting forth the number, nature, result, and cost of the proceedings instituted by the director in accordance with those regulations, from the 1st day of January, 1906, to the 31st day December, 1906, in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 183, of Session 1906)."—(*Mr. Herbert Samuel*) 67

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NEW MEMBER SWORN.—James Carrige Rushe Lardner, esquire, for the County of Monaghan (North Monaghan Division) 124

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member from Standing Committee C (in respect of the Small Holdings and Allotments Bill): Mr. Herbert Craig; and had appointed in substitution (in respect of the Small Holdings and Allotments Bill): Mr. Morrell.

Report to lie upon the Table 124

EVICTED TENANTS (IRELAND).

The Chief Secretary for Ireland (*Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.*) 124

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to facilitate the provision of land for certain evicted tenants in Ireland, and for other purposes connected therewith; and to make provision with respect to the tenure of office by the Estates Commissioners."—(*Mr. Birrell.*)

Mr. Walter Long (*Dublin, S.*) 132

Question put, and agreed to.

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Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Birrell, Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland, and Mr. T. W. Russell.

Evicted Tenants (Ireland) Bill.—"To facilitate the provision of land for certain evicted tenants in Ireland, and for other purposes connected therewith; and to make provision with respect to the tenure of office by the Estates Commissioners," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 258.]

SUPPLY [14TH ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1907–8, CLASS II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £184,484, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1908, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade and Subordinate Departments."

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Mr. Bonar Law (Camberwell, Dulwich) 172
The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. John Burns, Battersea) 176
Mr. Ward (Stoke-on-Trent) 177

And, it being a quarter past Eight of the Clock, and there being Private Business set down by direction of the Chairman of Ways and Means under Standing Order No. 8, further Proceeding was postponed without Question put.

King Edward's Hospital Fund for London Bill [LORDS] (BY ORDER).—Consideration, as amended, deferred till Monday next, at a quarter past Eight of the Clock.

SUPPLY (CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES).

Postponed Proceeding on Question, "That a sum, not exceeding £184,848, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1908, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of the Committee of the Privy Council for Trade and Subordinate Departments," resumed.

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Mr. Havelock Wilson (Middlesbrough) 180
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Mr. Wilkie (Dundee) 191
Mr. Joyce (Limerick) 193
Mr. R. Duncan (Lanarkshire, Govan) 193
Mr. C. E. Price (Edinburgh, Central) 193
Mr. Morton (Sutherland) 194

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolution to be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £128,735, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1908, for the salaries and expenses of the office of His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Department and subordinate offices."

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The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.) .. 200
Sir F. Banbury (City of London) 202
Mr. Gladstone 203
Mr. Bellairs (Lynn Regis) 205

It being Eleven of the clock, the CHAIRMAN left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next.

Committee also report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

British North America Bill.—Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; read the third time, and passed 208

Adjourned at five minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 28TH JUNE, 1907.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 209

Canal Tolls and Charges (New Junction Canal) Order Confirmation Bill [LORDS].—Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment .. 209

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 14) Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 209

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Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 13) Bill—As amended, considered; to be read the third time upon Monday next 209

PETITIONS.

WEEKLY REST-DAY BILL.—Petition from Harlesden, and other places, in favour; to lie upon the Table 209

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION.—Copy presented, of Return of Advances made under the Irish Land Act, 1903, during the period from 1st November, 1903, to 31st December, 1905. Vol. I. Part II. [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 209

PUBLIC WORKS LOAN BOARD.—Copy presented, of Thirty-second Annual Report (for 1906–7), with Appendices [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 226] 209

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

ENGLISH SMALL HOLDINGS BILL—SUGGESTED EXTENSION TO IRELAND.—Question, Mr. O'Shee (Waterford, W.); Answer, Mr. Birrell 209

BOYCOTTING OF MR. PAYNE, OF FOHINAGH.—Question, Viscount Turnour (Sussex, Horsham); Answer, Mr. Birrell 210

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MEDICAL EXAMINATION OF IMMIGRANTS INTO AUSTRALIA.—Question, Mr. Vincent Kennedy (Cavan, W.); Answer, Mr. Churchill 211

Statute Law Revision Bill [LORDS].—Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 259] .. 212

Telegraph (Money) Bill.—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [21st June], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Which Amendment was—

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, and add the words 'it is undesirable to authorise further capital expenditure upon telegraphs or telephones until a full statement has been presented to Parliament showing the financial results of the past working of the Post Office telegraphs and telephones judged from the standpoint of an ordinary commercial undertaking.'"—(*Mr. Harold Cox*)—instead thereof.

Question again proposed "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

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Mr. Chiozza Money (Paddington, N.) 214
Mr. C. E. Price (Edinburgh, Central) 216

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Mr. Nolan (Louth, S.) 217
Mr. Bowles (Lambeth, Norwood) 219
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Viscount Turnour (Sussex, Horsham) 238
Lord Balcarres (Lancashire, Chorley) 240
Mr. T. L. Corbett (Down, N.) 240
Mr. Sydney Buxton 241

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to a Standing Committee.

Australian States Constitution Bill [Lords].—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Churchill.*)

Sir F. Banbury 242
The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Churchill, Manchester, N.W.) 243
Mr. Forster 244
Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.) 245
Major Anstruther-Gray (St. Andrew's Burghs) 245
Viscount Turnour 245
Mr. Churchill 246
Mr. Rawlinson (Cambridge University) 247

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House for Monday next.

Evidence (Colonial Statutes) Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Churchill 247

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Lord Balcarres 249
The Attorney-General (Sir John Walton, Leeds, S.) 249
Sir F. Banbury 250
Mr. Moore (Armagh, N.) 251
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Mr. Churchill 253
Mr. Foster 254
Capt. Craig (*Down, E.*) 254

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to a Standing Committee.

CRIMINAL APPEAL (EXPENSES).

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it is expedient to authorise the payment out of moneys provided by Parliament of the salaries of the Registrar of the Court of Criminal Appeal and his staff appointed under any Act of the present session to establish a Court of Criminal Appeal and to amend the law relating to appeals in criminal cases, and of the expense of taking shorthand notes and of making transcripts in pursuance of such Act."—(*Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*)

Sir F. Banbury 255
Sir John Walton 256
Mr. Akers Douglas (*Kent, St. Augustine*) 257
Sir F. Banbury 259

Amendment proposed—

"At the end, to add the words, 'such expenditure not to exceed £6,000 per annum.'"—(*Sir F. Banbury.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. T. L. Corbett 260
Lord R. Cecil 260
Captain Craig 262
Sir John Walton 262

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 32 ; Noes, 199. (Division List, No. 253.)

Main Question again proposed.

And, it being after Five of the clock, and objection being taken to Further Proceeding, the CHAIRMAN proceeded to interrupt the Business.

Whereupon Mr. ATTORNEY-GENERAL rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 193 ; Noes, 29. (Division List, No. 254.)

Main Question put accordingly, and agreed to.

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the payment out of moneys provided by Parliament of the Salaries of the Registrar of the Court of Criminal Appeal and his staff appointed under any Act of the present session to establish a Court of Criminal Appeal and to amend the Law relating to Appeals in Criminal Cases, and of the expense of taking shorthand notes and of making transcripts in pursuance of such Act.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next.

Injured Animals Act (1894) Amendment Bill—As amended (by the Standing Committee), considered; read the third time, and passed 267

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Members from Standing Committee C: Mr. Shackleton and Mr. John Taylor (in respect of the Small Holdings and Allotments Bill), Mr. George Roberts added in respect of the Small Holdings and Allotments Bill); and had appointed in substitution (in respect of the Small Holdings and Allotments Bill): Mr. Hodge, Mr. Gill, and Mr. Jowett.

Report to lie upon the Table 267

Whereupon Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to Standing Order No. 3.

Adjourned at eighteen minutes after Five o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS, MONDAY, 1st JULY, 1907.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with:—North Staffordshire Railway.

The same was ordered to lie on the Table 269

Kingston-upon-Hull Corporation Bill.—A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee 269

Great Central Railway Bill.—The King's consent signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 269

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill.—The King's consent signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 269

Anfield Plain and District Gas Bill.—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 269

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Dundee Corporation Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.].—The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn 269

Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway (Additional Capital, etc.) Bill.—Moved, That the order made on the 20th day of March last, " That no Private Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after the 18th day of June next," be dispensed with, and that the Bill now be read 2^a ; agreed to : Bill read 2^a accordingly, and committed 269

Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway (General Powers Bill; Barry Railway Bill. Moved, That the order made on the 20th day of March last, " That no Private Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after the 18th day of June next," be dispensed with, and that the Bills be now read 2^a ; agreed to : Bills read 2^a accordingly, and committed : The committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 269

Broadstairs and St. Peter's Urban District Water Bill [H.L.]; Alton Military Hospital Bill [H.L.].—Read 3 , and passed, and sent to the Commons 270

Canal Tolls and Charges (New Junction Canal) Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.].—Returned from the Commons agreed to 270

Kingston-upon-Hull Corporation Bill.—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Inchiquin be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bill in the place of the Lord Hamilton of Dalzell ; read, and agreed to 270

Hull and Barnsley Railway Bill.—Read 3^a, with the Amendments ; and passed, and returned to the Commons 270

North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill.—Brought from the Commons, read 1^a, and referred to the Examiners 270

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11) Bill (No. 87) ; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 14) Bill (No. 88).—Read 1^a ; to be printed, and referred to the Examiners 270

Ladybank Sewerage, Drainage, and Water Provisional Order Bill.—Read 1^a ; to be printed ; and (pursuant to the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899) deemed to have been read 2^a (The Lord Hamilton of Dalzell) and reported from the Committee. (No. 89.) 270

Educational Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London, No. 1) Bill [H.L.] ; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill [H.L.].—Read 3^a (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons 270

Land Drainage Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill ; Land Drainage Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill.—Read 3^a (according to order), with the Amendments ; and passed, and returned to the Commons 270

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RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.—Regulations for secondary schools (in force from 1st August, 1907).

Code of Regulations for public elementary schools in England, exclusive of Wales and Monmouthshire, with Schedules, 1907 271

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.
No. 3844. China (Shanghai).
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EXPLOSIVES ACT, 1875.—Thirty-first Annual Report of His Majesty's Inspectors of Explosives, being their Annual Report for the year 1906 271

LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITIES (ENGLAND AND WALES).—Statements showing, as regards England and Wales—

The total number of members of boards of guardians, urban district councils (other than town councils), and rural district councils, and the number who are women; and

The total number of members of the education committees established by local education authorities, and the number who are women 271

IRISH LAND COMMISSION.—Return of advances made under the Irish Land Act, 1903, during the period from 1st November, 1903, to the 31st December, 1905. Vol. I., Part II 271

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC ACT, 1888.—Report to the Board of Trade of an inspection of the Cromford Canal under Section 41 of the Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 271

WOODS, FORESTS, AND LAND REVENUES.—Eighty-fifth Report of the Commissioners of His Majesty's Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues, dated 27th June, 1907 271

PUBLIC WORKS LOAN BOARD.—Thirty-second Annual Report of the Public Works Loan Board, 1906–1907 (with appendices).

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 272

Advertisements Regulation Bill.—Order for the Second Reading on Tuesday the 9th instant, discharged 272

British North America Bill—Read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª To-morrow. (No. 85) 272

Injured Animals Act (1894) Amendment Bill—Read 1ª, and to be printed. (No. 86) 272

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House adjourned at Ten minutes before Eight o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: MONDAY, 1st JULY, 1907.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz.:—Pasley Children Legitimisation Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 319

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—York (Micklegate) Strays Bill [Lords]; Colne Valley Water Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time 320

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).—Mr Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof,

the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.: Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [Lords.]

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time To-morrow .. 320

General Accident, Fire and Life Assurance Corporation, Limited, Bill [Lords]; Ocean Accident and Guarantee Corporation Bill [Lords].—Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment 320

Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [Lords].—As amended, considered: to be read the third time 320

Merthyr Tydvil Stipendiary Justice Bill [Lords]; Middlesbrough, Stockton-on-Tees, and Thornaby Tramways Bill [Lords].—Read a second time, and committed 320

Birkenhead Corporation Water Bill [Lords] (By Order).—Read a second time, and committed 320

Message from the Lords.—That they have agreed to: Brighouse Corporation Bill, with Amendments.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Castleford, Egham, Formby, Grimsby (Extension), Liversedge, Maldens and Coombe, Mansfield (Extension to Mansfield Woodhouse), Paignton, Selby, and Stoke-upon-Trent (Extension)." [Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to dissolve the marriage of Gwenllian Pascoe Killery, the wife of St. John Brown Killery, a Captain in the Royal Army Medical Corps, with the said St. John Killery, and to enable her to marry again; and for other purposes." [Killery's Divorce Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise the Urban District Council of Broadstairs and St. Peter's to construct additional waterworks and to confer on the Council further powers in relation to their waterworks undertaking; and for other purposes." [Broadstairs and St. Peter's Urban District Water Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to enable the Alton Military Hospital to be utilised for the purposes of a Cripples' Home and College." [Alton Military Hospital Bill [Lords].. 321

Broadstairs and St. Peter's Urban District Water Bill [Lords]; Alton Military Hospital Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 321

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 261] 321

Killery's Divorce Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; to be read a second time 321

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PETITIONS.

Weekly Rest-day Bill.—Petition from London and other places, in favour; to lie upon the Table 321

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

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Trade Reports (Annual Series).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3844 and 3845 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 322

Board of Education.—Copy presented, of Regulations for Secondary Schools (from 1st August, 1907, to 31st July, 1908) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 322

Board of Education (Code 1907).—Copy presented, of Code of Regulations for Public Elementary Schools, with Schedules, by the Board of Education [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 322

Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888.—Copy presented, of Report to the Board of Trade of Inspection of the Cromford Canal, under Section 41 of the Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 322

Women on Local Authorities.—Copy presented, of Statement showing the number of Women serving on Boards of Guardians and other Local Authorities [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 324

Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues.—Copy presented, of Eighty-fifth Report of the Commissioners, dated 27th June, 1907 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 227] 324

Isle of Man.—Account presented, of Revenue and Expenditure for the year ended 31st March, 1907, with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 228] 324

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Public Health Bill.—Reported, with Amendments, from Standing Committee A.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 229.]

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CRIMINAL APPEAL [EXPENSES].—Resolution reported: "That it is expedient to authorise the payment out of moneys provided by Parliament of the salaries of the Registrar of the Court of Criminal Appeal and his staff appointed under any Act of the present Session to establish a Court of Criminal Appeal and to amend the Law relating to Appeals in Criminal Cases, and of the expenses of taking shorthand notes and of making transcripts in pursuance of such Act" 377

Resolution agreed to.

Finance Bill.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

Clause 1:—

Mr. Nield (Middlesex, Ealing) 377

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 21, after the word 'pound' to insert the words 'fifty per cent. *ad valorem*, but not to exceed.'"—(*Mr. Nield.*)

Question proposed. "That these words be there inserted."

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Mr. John Redmond (*Waterford*) 388
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Mr. Rees (*Montgomery Boroughs*) 391

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 18 ; Noes, 212. (Division List No. 255.)

Mr. Bridgeman (*Shropshire, Oswestry*) 393

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 21, to leave out the word 'five,' and insert the word 'four.'"—(*Mr. Bridgeman.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'five' stand part of the clause."

The Postmaster-General (*Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar*) .. 395
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Mr. R. Pearce (*Staffordshire, Leek*) 420

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 195 ; Noes, 136. (Division List No. 256.)

Mr. Fell (*Great Yarmouth*) 423

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 21, at the end to insert the words 'Provided that tea which has been grown and manufactured in any British Colony or Dependency shall be charged only a duty per pound of fourpence.'"

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

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Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 53 ; Noes, 217. (Division List No. 257.)

Question proposed, " That Clause 1 stand part of the Bill."

Mr. Fletcher (Hampstead) .. 437

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 184 ; Noes, 71. (Division List, No. 258.)

King Edward's Hospital Fund for London Bill [Lords] (by Order).—Order for Consideration, as amended, read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, " That the Bill, as amended, be now considered."

Dr. Rutherford (Middlesex, Brentford) .. 441

Mr. Trevelyan (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland) .. 444

Amendment proposed—

" To leave out from the words 'be,' to the end of the Question, and add the words 'recommitted to the former Committee.' "—(*Dr. Rutherford.*)

Question proposed, " That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the question."

Mr. Jowett (Bradford, W.) .. 447
The Attorney-General (Sir John Walton, Leeds, S.) .. 449
Mr. G. Greenwood (Peterborough) .. 452
Sir W. J. Collins (St. Pancras, W.) .. 454
Mr. Morton (Sutherland) .. 456
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs) .. 457
Mr. A. J. Balfour (City of London) .. 460

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Question proposed, " That the Bill be now considered."

Mr. Morton .. 461

New clause not seconded.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill, as amended, considered.

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Amendments made to the Bill.

Bill to be read the third time.

Finance Bill.

Postponed proceeding, resumed.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. CALDWELL, Deputy-Chairman, in the Chair.]

Clause 2 :—

Col. Lockwood (*Essex, Epping*) 462

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 6, to leave out the words 'Parliament otherwise determine,' and insert the words 'the first day of July, nineteen hundred and eight'—(*Colonel Lockwood*)—instead thereof."

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

Mr. Asquith 466
Mr. Leif Jones (*Westmoreland, Appleby*) 469
Mr. Cave (*Surrey, Kingston*) 471
Mr. Stanley Wilson (*Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness*) 471
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Mr. Moore (*Armagh, N.*) 476
Mr. Claude Hay (*Shoreditch, Hoxton*) 478
Mr. Wm. Redmond (*Clare, E.*) 480

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 197 ; Noes, 99. (Division List No. 259).

Clause 2 agreed to.

Clause 3 agreed to.

On Clause 4 :—

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (*Mr. Runciman, Dewsbury*) 483

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 19, to leave out the words 'for any purpose.'"—(*Mr. Runciman.*)

Question, " That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause," put, and negatived.

Amendment proposed—

" In page 2, line 20, after the word ' ascertaining,' to insert the words ' for any purpose.' "—(*Mr. Runciman.*)

Question, " That those words be there inserted," put, and agreed to.

Question proposed, " That the clause stand part of the Bill."

Mr. William Rutherford 484
Mr. Asquith 484

Question put, and agreed to.

Committee report Progress ; to sit again To-morrow.

And, it being after half-past Eleven of the clock, Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Adjourned at Five minutes before Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: TUESDAY, 2ND JULY, 1907.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with : North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply.

Also the Certificate that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with : Central London Railway.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table 485

Central London Railway Bill.—Examiners' Certificate of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Monday next 485

Leeds Corporation Bill.—Reported, with Amendments 485

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill.—Reported, without Amendment, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow 485

Great Northern and City Railway Bill.—Reported, with an Amendment .. 485

Tramways Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.] ; Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.].—Reported, with Amendments, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow 485

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Portishead District Water Bill [H.L.].—Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons 485

General Accident Fire and Life Assurance Corporation, Limited, Bill [H.L.]; Ocean Accident and Guarantee Corporation Bill [H.L.].—Returned from the Commons agreed to 485

Kingston-upon-Hull Corporation Bill.—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Suffield be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bill in the place of the Lord Bowes (*E. Strathmore and Kinghorn*); read, and agreed to 486

Dundee Corporation Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.].—Read 2ª (according to order), and (pursuant to the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899) deemed to have been reported from the Committee; and Bill to be read 3ª To-morrow 486

PETITION.

QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN (COUNTY AND BOROUGH COUNCILS) BILL [H.L.].—Petition against; of the Westminster City Council; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 486

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

FRANCE (No. 1), 1907.—Despatch from His Majesty's Ambassador at Paris transmitting the Treaty between France and Siam; signed at Bangkok, 23rd March, 1907 486

FISHERIES (SCOTLAND).—Twenty-fifth Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland, being for the year 1906. Part II. Salmon Fisheries.

Presented (by Command) and ordered to lie on the Table 486

THE ARTILLERY.

The Marquess of Lansdowne 486
The Under-Secretary of State for War (*The Earl of Portsmouth*) 487

Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Bill [H.L.].—House in Committee (according to order).

[The Earl of ONSLOW in the Chair.]

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2:—

The Earl of Camperdown 487

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 2, after the second 'the' to insert the word 'provisional.'"—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

The President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries (*Earl Carrington*) 487

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

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Earl Carrington 488

Amendment moved—

"In page 3, line 7, after the word 'provisions,' to insert the words 'including provisions for payment of compensation to persons injuriously affected by the order.'"—(*Earl Carrington.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

The Earl of Denbigh 489

Amendment moved—

"In page 3, line 23, after the word 'advertisement' to insert as a new subsection: '(4) An order under this Act shall not apply to any waters in which the business of artificially propagating or rearing salmon or trout is carried on under a licence granted by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, and any such licence may be granted by the Board, subject to such conditions (if any) as they think fit, and may be revoked if the Board are of opinion that any condition has not been observed.'"—(*The Earl of Denbigh.*)

Earl Carrington 489

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 3:—

The Earl of Camperdown 489

Amendment moved—

"In page 3, line 24, to leave out the word 'An,' and to insert the words 'A provisional.'"—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Lord Newton 490

Amendment moved—

"In page 3, line 28, to leave out the word 'one-tenth' and to insert the word 'one-fourth.'"—(*Lord Newton.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Earl Carrington 490

Amendment moved—

"In page 3, line 32, after the word 'advertised' to insert the words 'by the applicants.'"—(*Earl Carrington.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 3, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 4:—

Amendment moved—

> "In page 3, line 36, to leave out the word 'an,' and to insert the words 'a provisional.'"—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

The Earl of Camperdown 491

Amendment moved—

> "In page 4, line 12, after the second 'the,' to insert the words 'terms of the draft.'"—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 4, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 5:—

The Earl of Camperdown 492

Amendment moved—

> "In page 4, line 20, to leave out the word 'may' and insert the word 'shall.'"—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

Earl Carrington 492
The Earl of Camperdown 492

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 5, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 6:—

Earl Carrington 493

Amendment moved—

> "In page 4, lines 30 to 36, to leave out Subsection (1)."—(*Earl Carrington.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 7:—

Earl Carrington 493

Amendment moved—

"In page 5, line 8, after the word 'Act' to insert the words 'or any fishery proposed to be affected by any such order.'"—(*Earl Carrington.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Consequential Amendments agreed to.

Clause 7, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 8:—

Amendment moved—

"In page 5, line 36, after the word 'Esk' to insert the words 'in Dumfriesshire.'"—(*Earl Carrington.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Bill reported with Amendments to the House.

Bill re-committed to the Standing Committee; and to be printed as amended. (No. 90.)

Limited Partnership Bill. [Second Reading.]—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Lord Avebury 494

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."—(*Lord Avebury.*)

The Earl of Granard 495

On Question, Bill read 2^a, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

British North America Bill [Second Reading].—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

The Secretary of State for the Colonies (*The Earl of Elgin*) 496

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."—(*The Earl of Elgin.*)

On Question, Bill read 2^a, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House

QUEEN'S BARRACKS, PERTH.

The Earl of Kinnoul 496
The Under-Secretary of State for War (*The Earl of Portsmouth*) 496

THE MILITIA AND THE ARMY BILL.

The Duke of Bedford 497
The Earl of Portsmouth 498
Viscount Midleton 498

SECOND CHAMBERS IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

The Earl of Rosebery 499

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty for a Return of the Second Chambers in foreign countries, their composition, and their functions."—(*The Lord Rosebery* (*E. Rosebery*).)

On Question, Motion agreed to, and ordered accordingly.

TRAINING OF THE SPECIAL RESERVE.

The Marquess of Salisbury 499
The Earl of Portsmouth 500
The Earl of Donoughmore 500
Lord Blythswood 501

House adjourned at a quarter past Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 2ND JULY, 1907.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Electric Supply Corporation Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 501

Burnham (Somerset) Pier Bill [LORDS];—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 501

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [LORDS].—Read a second time, and committed 502

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 13) Bill (BY ORDER).—Read the third time, and passed 502

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.—That they have agreed to:—Land Drainage Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill; Land Drainage Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill; Hull and Barnsley Railway Bill, with Amendments.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Board of Education under the Education Acts, 1870 to 1903, to enable the London County Council to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts. [Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London, No. 1) Bill [Lords.]

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Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the rural district of Ballycastle, the Bangor and Newtownards Joint Hospital, county Down, and the urban district of Dalkey." [Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer further powers upon the Portishead District Water Company; and for other purposes." [Portishead District Water Bill [Lords] 502

Land Drainage Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill.—Lords' Amendments to be considered To-morrow 502

Land Drainage Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill.—Lords' Amendments to be considered To-morrow 502

Portishead District Water Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 502

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London, No. 1) Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 262.] 503

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; Referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 263.] 503

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill—Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table. Bill to be read the third time to-morrow 503

PETITIONS.

Education (Scotland) Bill.—Petitions for alteration: From Aberdeen; Airdrie; and Glasgow; to lie upon the Table 503

Employers' Liability (Insurance Companies) Bill.—Petition from Walsall, in favour; to lie upon the Table 503

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Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill.—Petition from Bristol, against to lie upon the Table 503

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PROSECUTION OF OFFENCES ACTS, 1879 AND 1884.—Return presented, relative thereto [Address 27th June; *Mr. Herbert Samuel*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 230.] 504

FISHERY BOARD (SCOTLAND).—Copy presented of Twenty-fifth Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland, being for the year 1906. Part II. Salmon Fisheries [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 504

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) (NON-PROVIDED SCHOOLS).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 23rd February, 1906; *Mr. Birrell*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 231.] 504

TELEGRAPH CONSTRUCTION BILL.—Copy ordered, "of Memorandum explanatory of the Telegraph Construction Bill."—(*Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) .

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 232.] 504

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SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had added the following Member to Standing Committee A: Earl of Ronaldshay.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee; That they had discharged the following Member from Standing Committee A (in respect of the Petty Sessions Clerks (Ireland) Bill): Mr. Attorney-General; and had appointed in substitution (in respect of the Petty Sessions Clerks (Ireland) Bill): Mr. Solicitor-General for Ireland.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee; That they had added to Standing Committee A the following fifteen Members (in respect of the Petty Sessions Clerks (Ireland) Bill): Mr. Sloan, Mr. Wolff, Mr. Hugh Barrie, Mr. Crean, Mr. Flynn, Mr. Liddell, Mr. O'Shee, Mr. Reddy, Mr. Power, Mr. Farrell, Mr. Glendinning, Mr. Sheehan, Mr. Moore, Mr. Harrington, and Mr. Ffrench.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee; That they had discharged the following Members from Standing Committee B (in respect of the Telegraph (Money) Bill and of the Evidence (Colonial Statutes) Bill): Mr. Burns, Dr. Macnamara, and Mr. Solicitor-General; and had appointed in substitution (in respect of the Telegraph (Money) Bill and of the Evidence (Colonial Statutes) Bill): Mr. Buxton, Mr. Runciman, and Mr. Churchill.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee; That they had added to Standing Committee B the following fourteen Members (in respect of the Telegraph (Money) Bill and of the Evidence (Colonial Statutes (Bill): Mr. William Redmond, Mr. Smyth, Mr. Gibbs, Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Mr. Meysey-Thompson, Mr. John Rutherford, Mr. Steadman, Mr. Hamar Greenwood, Mr. Lyulph Stanley, Mr. Harold Cox, Mr. Chiozza Money, Mr. Marnham, Mr. Bennett, and Sir Frank Edwards.

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Finance Bill.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)
[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

Clauses 5 and 6 agreed to.

Clause 7 :—

Mr. H. H. Marks (*Kent, Thanet*) 543

Amendment proposed—

"In page 3, line 21, after the word 'property,' to insert the words 'to policies of insurance or indemnity against liability incurred by employers in consequence of claims made upon them by workmen who have sustained personal injury.'"—(*Mr. H. H. Marks.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (*Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, E.*) .. 544
Mr. Austen Chamberlain (*Worcestershire, E.*) 544

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 8 :—

Mr. Harmood-Banner (*Liverpool, Everton*) 545

Amendment proposed—

"In page 3, lines 29 and 30, to leave out the words 'in accordance with Section 15 of the said Act,' and to insert the words 'by any person with an adhesive stamp within thirty days after it has been first received in the United Kingdom.'"—(*Mr. Harmood-Banner.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

Mr. Asquith 547

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 9 :—

Mr. Harmood-Banner 547

Amendment proposed—

> "In page 4, line 16, at end, to add the words—'(3) Where it is shown to the satisfaction of the Commissioners that the share capital of a company which it is proposed to register under the Companies Acts, 1862 to 1900, is to be issued in pursuance of a scheme of reconstruction under section one hundred and sixty-one of The Companies Act, 1862, of a company registered under the Companies Acts, 1862 to 1900, the capital duty of five shillings per centum, imposed by The Finance Act, 1899, shall only be chargeable to the extent that the share capital, or any part of it, of the company to be registered is under the scheme to be paid up wholly or partly in cash.'"—*Mr. Harmood-Banner.*

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. Asquith 548

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 10 :—

Mr. Austen Chamberlain 548

Clause agreed to.

Clause 11 :—

Mr. Asquith 549

Amendment proposed—

> "In page 4, line 38, at the end to insert the words, 'Provided that where an interest in expectancy (within the meaning of Part I. of the principal Act) in any property has before the nineteenth day of April, nineteen hundred and seven, been *bona fide* sold or mortgaged for full consideration in money or money's worth, then no other duty on that property shall be payable by the purchaser or mortgagee when the interest falls into possession than would have been payable if this section had not passed; and in the case of a mortgage any higher duty payable by the mortgagor shall rank as a charge subsequent to that of the mortgagee.'"—(*The Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. Austen Chamberlain 549

Question put, and agreed to.

Question proposed, "That the Clause, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

Mr. Hicks Beach (*Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury*) 550
The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (*Mr. Runciman, Dewsbury*) .. 552
Mr. Wyndham (*Dover*) 552
Sir Charles Dilke (*Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean*) 555

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Colonel Kenyon-Slaney (Shropshire, Newport) 557
The President of the Board of Education (Mr. McKenna, Monmouthshire, N.) 557
Mr. Austen Chamberlain 559
Mr. Evans (Glamorganshire, Mid.) 563
Sir F. Banbury (City of London) 565
Mr. Asquith 567
Mr. J. F. Mason (Windsor) 568
Mr. Bowles (Lambeth, Norwood) 569
Lord Willoughby de Eresby (Lincolnshire, Horncastle) 571
Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.) 573
Viscount Turnour (Sussex, Horsham) 575
Lord Balcarres (Lancashire, Chorley) 576
Mr. Markham (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield) 578
Mr. George Faber (York) 578

Mr. Asquith rose in his place, and claimed to move, " That the Question be now put."

Question put, " That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 309 ; Noes, 89. (Division List No. 260.)

Question put accordingly, " That the Clause, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 315 ; Noes, 82. (Division List No. 261.)

Clause 12 :—

Mr. Meysey Thompson (Staffordshire, Handsworth) 589
Mr. Asquith 589

Clause agreed to.

Clause 13 agreed to.

Clause 14 :—

Mr. Austen Chamberlain 590
Mr. McKenna 590
Sir F. Banbury 591
Mr. Austen Chamberlain 591
Mr. Asquith 592

Clause agreed to.

Clause 15 :—

Amendment proposed—

" In page 5, lines 22 and 23, to leave out the words ' after the passing of this Act,' and insert the words ' on or after the 19th day of April, 1907.' "—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

Question proposed, " That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

The Postmaster-General (*Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar*) .. 593
Mr. Austen Chamberlain 593

Question put, and agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 16 :—

Amendment proposed—

"In page 5, line 38, after the word 'licences,' insert the words including any duty charged under Subsection (1) of Section 8 of The Locomotives on Highways Act, 1896).' "—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and agreed to.

Mr. Leif Jones (*Westmorland, Appleby*) 596

Amendment proposed—

"In page 6, line 7, at the end, to insert the words, 'Provided that this subsection shall not apply to licences for the sale of intoxicating liquors.' "—(*Mr. Leif Jones.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. Asquith 597
Mr. Austen Chamberlain 598
Mr. Asquith 600
Sir F. Banbury 600
Mr. Hicks Beach 601
Mr. Charles Roberts 601

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 47 ; Noes, 234. (Division List, No. 262.)

And it being a quarter past Eight of the Clock, and there being Private Business set down by direction of the Chairman of Ways and Means, under Standing Order No. 8, further proceeding was postponed without Question put.

Humber Conservancy Bill [LORDS] (BY ORDER).—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Major Renton (*Lincolnshire, Gainsborough*) 605
Mr. Newnes (*Nottinghamshire, Bassetlaw*) 609

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now' and at the end of the Question to add the words, 'this day three months.' "—(*Major Renton.*)

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Question proposed, " That the word ' now ' stand part of the Question."

Sir Seymour King (Hull, Central) 612
Mr. Compton Rickett (Yorkshire, W.R., Osgoldcross) 618
Mr. Adkins (Lancashire, Middleton) 620
The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Kearley, Devonport) 622
Mr. Ellis (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe) 626
Mr. Charles Wilson (Hull, W.) 627

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Sir George Doughty (Great Grimsby) 628

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed.

Finance Bill.

Postponed proceeding, resumed.

[Mr. Caldwell in the Chair.]

Mr. Fell (Great Yarmouth) 629

Amendment proposed—

" In page 6, line 13, at the end, to insert the words, ' but the normal increase in the proceeds of such duties shall belong to and be paid into the Local Taxation Account.' "—(*Mr. Fell.*)

Question proposed, " That those words be there inserted."

Mr. Sydney Buxton 630
Mr. Austen Chamberlain 630

Question, " That those words be there inserted," put, and negatived.

Question proposed, " That the Clause, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

Motion made, and Question put, " That the Chairman do report progress ; and ask leave to sit again."—(*Sir F. Banbury.*)

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 73 ; Noes, 253. (Division List No. 263.)

Question proposed, " That the clause, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

Mr. Austen Chamberlain 635
Mr. Asquith 635
Mr. Harmood-Banner 635
Mr. McKenna 638
Mr. Austen Chamberlain 639
Mr. Asquith 640
Mr. A. J. Balfour (City of London) 641
Mr. Asquith 642

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 17 :—

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Chairman do report Progress; and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*)

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 85 ; Noes, 241. (Division List No. 264.)

Committee report Progress ; to sit again To-morrow.

Imported Watch-Cases Bill.—As amended (by the Standing Committee), considered ; read the third time and passed 648

Adjourned at twenty-seven minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: WEDNESDAY, 3RD JULY, 1907.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

North Staffordshire Railway Bill.—Moved, That the order made on the 20th day of March last, "That no Private Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after the 18th day of June next," be dispensed with, and that the Bill be now read 2^{a}; agreed to: Bill read 2^{a} accordingly, and committed: The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 649

Dundee Corporation Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.].—Read 3^{a} (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons 649

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]; Tramways Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.].—House in Committee (according to order): The Amendments proposed by the Committee made: Standing Committee negatived: The Report of Amendments to be received To-morrow 649

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill.—House in Committee (according to order): Bill reported without Amendment: Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3^{a} To-morrow. 649

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 13) Bill.—Read 1^{a}; to be printed, and referred to the Examiners. (No. 92) 649

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EAST AFRICA PROTECTORATE.—Correspondence relating to the flogging of natives by certain Europeans at Nairobi 649

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3846, Spain (Bilbao).
No. 3847, Germany (Frankfort).

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table .. 649

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SEA FISHERIES REGULATION ACT, 1888.—Order made by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries under the provisions of the above Act, for the variation of an order for the creation of the Eastern Sea Fisheries District, together with Report by inspector on inquiry 650

SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904 (COUNTY OF SOMERSET).—Order made by the council of the county of Somerset, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the hours of closing for certain classes of shops within the parish of Tiverton.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 650

Prohibition of Medical Practice by Companies Bill [H.L.].—Bill read 3^a according to order.

The Lord President of the Council (*The Earl of Crewe*) 650

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 1, page 1, line 8, to leave out from the second word 'company' to the word 'shall' in line 10."—(*The Earl of Crewe.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 1, page 1, line 12, after the word 'happens' to insert the words 'and every director, manager, or other officer of the company who knowingly and wilfully authorises or permits such contravention shall incur the like penalty.'"—(*The Earl of Crewe.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

The Earl of Crewe 651

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 2, page 2, line 5, to leave out from the word 'means' to the end of the clause, and to insert the words 'any body corporate wherever established which carries on business in the United Kingdom.'" (*The Earl of Crewe.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

Imported Watch-Cases Bill.—Read 1^a, and to be printed. (No. 91.)

SUGAR BEET GROWING IN ENGLAND.

The Earl of Denbigh 651
The Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*Lord Fitzmaurice*) .. 659
The Marquess of Lansdowne 665
The Lord Privy Seal (*The Marquess of Ripon*) 670

House adjourned at Six o'clock till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 3RD JULY, 1907.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Heywood and Middleton Water Board Bill [LORDS].—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 672

Land Drainage Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill; Land Drainage Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill.—Lords' Amendments considered, and agreed to 672

Lights on Vehicles Bill.—Consideration, as amended (by the Standing Committee), upon Monday next 672

Sheffield Corporation Bill [LORDS].—Reported from the Police and Sanitary Committee, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 672

Leeds (South Parade Chapel) Charity Bill.—Reported, without Amendment, from Standing Committee A.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 234.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 234.]

Bill to be taken into consideration To-morrow 672

Kingswood (Whitfield Tabernacle, Schoolroom, etc) Charity Bill.—Reported without Amendment, from Standing Committee A.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 235.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 235.]

Bill to be taken into consideration To-morrow. 672

Longton (Caroline Street Chapel) Charity Bill.—Reported, without Amendment, from Standing Committee A.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 236.] 673

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 236.]

Bill to be taken into consideration To-morrow 673

Board of Education Scheme (Hulme Trust Estates Educational) Confirmation Bill.—Reported, without Amendment, from Standing Committee A.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 237.] 673

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 237.]

Bill to be taken into consideration To-morrow 673

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Tees Valley Water (Consolidation) Bill [LORDS].—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 673

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP J).—Major SEELY reported from the Committee on Group J of Private Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Friday, at half-past Eleven of the Clock.

Report to lie upon the Table 673

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill—Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill, as amended, to be considered To-morrow. 673

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Beath, for alteration; to lie upon the Table 673

VACCINATION ACTS.—Petition from Margate, for repeal; to lie upon the Table .. 673

WEEKLY REST-DAY BILL.—Petition from Harringay and other places, in favour; to lie upon the Table 674

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

SEA FISHERIES REGULATION ACT, 1888.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, under the provisions of the said Act, for the variation of an order for creating the Eastern Sea Fisheries District, together with Report by Inspector on Inquiry [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 233.] 674

EAST AFRICA PROTECTORATE.—Copy presented, of Correspondence relating to the Flogging of Natives by certain Europeans at Nairobi [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 674

SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Council of the County of Somerset, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the Hours of Closing for certain classes of Shops within the parish of Twerton [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 674

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3846 and 3847 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 674

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

PAYMENT BY COUNTY AUTHORITIES FOR SUPERVISING SLAUGHTER OF ANIMALS.—Question, Mr. Watt (Glasgow, College); Answer, Mr. Sinclair 674

SCOTS GREYS—STABLES AT TIDWORTH.—Question, Captain Faber (Hants, Andover); Answer, Mr. Haldane 675

WOOLWICH DISCHARGES—CONSIDERATION OF MEN'S DEPENDENTS.—Question, Mr. Claude Hay (Shoreditch, Hoxton); Answer, Mr. Haldane 675

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ARMY EXPENDITURE COAST PROTECTION.—Question, Mr. Cowen (Surrey, Guildford); Answer, Mr. Haldane 676

WAR OFFICE PURCHASE OF LAND AT KILCREGGAN.—Question, Mr. Watt; Answer, Mr. Haldane 676

PORTADOWN POST OFFICE STAFF.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 676

POSTMAN'S ROUTE AT MANDABAWN, COUNTY CAVAN.—Question, Mr. Samuel Young (Cavan, E.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 677

PAY OF BOARD OF TRADE TAPEHOLDERS.—Question, Mr. Summerbell (Sunderland); Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 678

ERECTION OF LIGHTS AT DAWROS BAY, COUNTY DONEGAL.—Question, Mr. Hugh Law (Donegal, W.); Answer, Mr. Birrell 678

OBSTRUCTION BY STANDING VEHICLES AT ATHLONE.—Question, Mr. Hayden (Roscommon, S.); Answer, Mr. Birrell 679

IRISH EVICTED TENANTS—CASE OF WILLIAM BURKE OF BALLINAGOULD.—Question, Mr. O'Shaughnessy (Limerick, W.); Answer, Mr. Birrell .. 680

APPLICATION FOR UNTENANTED LAND BY MICHAEL DUNDON.—Question, Mr. O'Shaughnessy; Answer, Mr. Birrell 680

TRADING LICENCES IN NATAL.—Question, Mr. Gretton (Rutland); Answer, Mr. Churchill 680

MERCHANT SHIPPING (TONNAGE) BILL AND PORT AUTHORITIES CHARGING DUES ON GROSS TONNAGE.—Question, Sir Thomas Esmonde (Wexford, N.); Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 681

RIGHTS FOR USE OF BASS ROCK.—Question, Mr. J. D. White (Dumbartonshire); Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 681

SUNDAY DELIVERY OF LETTERS AT PIDGEONS, NEAR ATHLONE.—Question, Sir W. R. Nugent (Westmeath, S.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 682

INCREASED WAGES FOR LABOURERS AT KEW GARDENS.—Question, Mr. Summerbell; Answer, Sir Edward Strachey 682

ASSESSMENT OF BOROUGH OF HAMPSTEAD.—Question, Dr. Ambrose (Mayo, W.); Answer, Mr. John Burns 682

AGREEMENT BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND MESSRS. KYNOCH.—Question, Mr. Gretton; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 683

SETTLEMENT OF CLAIMS FOR REFUND OF INCOME-TAX.—Question, Sir William Bull (Hammersmith); Answer, Mr. Asquith 684

BILLS DEALING WITH INDIA.—Question, Mr. Gretton; Answer, Mr. Morley .. 685

COMPENSATION PAID IN CONNECTION WITH ATHLONE RIFLE RANGE ARBITRATION.—Question, Mr. Hayden; Answer, Mr. Haldane 685

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QUEEN'S BARRACKS, PERTH.—Question, Major Anstruther-Gray (St. Andrew's Burghs); Answer, The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Mr. Buchanan, Perthshire, E.) 687

MARYHILL BARRACKS.—Question, Mr. Cochrane (Ayrshire, N.); Answer, Mr. Buchanan 688

INDIAN FACTORY LABOUR COMMITTEE.—Question, Mr. Smeaton (Stirlingshire); Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Mr. Morley, Montrose Burghs) .. 688

INDIA AND THE SUGAR CONVENTION.—Question, Sir Gilbert Parker (Gravesend); Answer, Mr. Morley 688

POLITICAL OFFICERS' EQUIPMENT IN SOMALILAND.—Question, Captain Faber (Hampshire, Andover); Answer, The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Churchill, Manchester, N.W.) 688

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TRANSVAAL LOAN BILL.—Question, Sir Gilbert Parker; Answer, Mr. Churchill 689

THE GRAND DUCHY OF LUXEMBURG.—Question, Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.); Answer The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Runciman, Dewsbury) .. 689

VACCINATION EXEMPTION CERTIFICATE FEES.—Question, Mr. J. D. White (Dumbartonshire); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.) 690

VACCINATION EXEMPTION—TILNEY ST. LAWRENCE SCHOOLMASTER.—Question, Mr. George White (Norfolk, N.W.); Answer, Mr. Gladstone 691

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RAILWAY COMPENSATION AND INSURANCE.—Question, Mr. Watt (Glasgow College); Answer, Mr. Lloyd-George 694

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD MEDICAL INSPECTORS.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. John Burns, Battersea) 695

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Mr. A. J. Balfour (City of London) 715
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Mr. A. J. Balfour 717
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs) 719

Ballot Act (1872) Amendment Bill.

Mr. Dunn (Cornwall, (Camborne) 720

Question, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Ballot Act, 1872, and to provide for the taking of a second ballot at Parliamentary and other elections," put, and agreed to.

Ordered to be brought in by Mr. Edward Dunn, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Rowlands, Mr. Glendinning, Mr. George Nicholls, and Mr. Arthur Richardson.

Ballot Act (1872) Amendment Bill.—"To amend The Ballot Act, 1872, and to provide for the taking of a second ballot at Parliamentary and other elections," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 265.]

Criminal Appeal Bill.—Reported, with Amendments, from Standing Committee B.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 238].

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 238].

Bill as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be taken into consideration upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 264] 724

Finance Bill.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 17.

[Mr. Emmott (Oldham) in the Chair].

Mr. J. F. Mason (Windsor) 724

Amendment proposed—

"In page 6, line 31, to leave out the words 'one shilling' and insert the words 'elevenpence.'"—(*Mr. J. F. Mason.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'one shilling' stand part of the clause."

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, E.) 727
Mr. Austen Chamberlain (Worcestershire, E.) 729
Mr. McCrae (Edinburgh, E.) 732
Sir Gilbert Parker (Gravesend) 734
Mr. Chiozza Money (Paddington, N.) 735
Mr. Samuel Roberts (Sheffield, Ecclesall) 736
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The Postmaster-General (Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar) .. 738
Mr. H. H. Marks (Kent, Thanet) 740
Mr. George Faber (York) 741

Question put.

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The Committee divided :—Ayes, 265 ; Noes, 95. (Division List No. 265.)

Mr. Annan Bryce (Inverness Burghs) 747

Amendment proposed—

"In page 6, line 35, at the end, to insert the words 'Provided that, in the case of companies with limited liability registered under the Companies' Acts, income-tax shall be charged on the amount distributed as dividend.' "—(*Mr. Annan Bryce.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

The President of the Board of Education (*Mr. McKenna, Monmouthshire, N.*) 750
Mr. Austen Chamberlain 751
Sir F. Banbury (*City of London*) 751
Sir E. Carson (*Dublin University*) 752
Mr. Asquith 753
Mr. Fell (*Great Yarmouth*) 753
Sir F. Banbury 754
Mr. Annan Bryce 754

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Question proposed, "That the clause stand part of the Bill."

Mr. Chiozza Money 755
Mr. Evans (*Glamorganshire, Mid.*) 759
Mr. Asquith 760

Clause agreed to.

Clause 18 :—

Mr. Jowett (*Bradford, W.*) 761

Amendment proposed—

"In page 7, line 11, to leave out the word 'two,' and insert the word 'one.' "—(*Mr. Jowett.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'two' stand part of the clause."

Mr. Asquith 762

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 237 ; Noes, 45. (Division List No. 266.)

Mr. J. F. Mason 767

Amendment proposed—

"In page 7, line 16, to leave out the words 'the rate of ninepence,' and insert the words 'three-fourths of the normal rate.' "—(*Mr. J. F. Mason.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

Mr. McKenna 768
Sir F. Banbury 769
Mr. Myer (Lambeth, N.) 769
Mr. Austen Chamberlain (Worcestershire) 770

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. Hicks Beach (Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury) 770

Amendment proposed—

"In page 7, line 19, to leave out all the words after 'Acts' to end of subsection."—(*Mr. Hicks Beach.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

Mr. Sydney Buxton 771
Mr. Austen Chamberlain 772
Mr. Asquith 774
Mr. G. D. Faber 775
Mr. Hicks Beach 776
Mr. Lupton 777
Sir F. Banbury 777
Mr. T. L. Corbett (Down, N.) 778
Mr. E. Gardner (Berkshire, Wokingham) 778

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 232; Noes, 39. (Division List No. 267.)

Mr. Hicks Beach 781

Amendment proposed—

"In page 7, line 39, to leave out the words 'thirtieth day of September,' and insert the words 'thirty-first day of January.'"—(*Mr. Hicks Beach.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. Runciman 782
Mr. Austen Chamberlain 783
Sir F. Banbury 784

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause," put, and agreed to.

Sir F. Banbury 784

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Amendment proposed—

"In page 7, line 12, after the second word 'income,' to insert the words 'whether by way of salary or share of profits for any office, or employment of profit in the year of assessment.' "—(*Sir F. Banbury.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. Asquith 785

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Sir Seymour King (*Hull, Central*) 786

Amendment proposed—

"In page 8, line 21, to leave out the word 'from,' and insert the words 'and any pension or superannuation allowance not paid out of funds contributed by the recipient received by the individual by reason of his holding or having held.' "—(*Sir Seymour King.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'from' stand part of the clause."

Mr. Asquith 787

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out in line 22 the words, 'in the year of assessment' in order to insert 'including any pension, superannuation allowance, or deferred pay in respect of past services in that office or employment.' " —(*Mr. Asquith.*)

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part" put, and negatived.

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. Austen Chamberlain 789
Mr. Lupton (*Lancashire, Sleaford*) 790
Mr. Forster (*Kent, Sevenoaks*) 790
Mr. Smeaton (*Stirlingshire*) 791
Mr. Rees (*Montgomery Boroughs*) 793
Mr. Meysey-Thompson (*Staffordshire, Handsworth*) 794
Sir J. Jardine (*Roxburghshire*) 794
Mr. Morton (*Sutherland*) 795
Mr. Yoxall (*Nottingham, W.*) 795
Mr. Asquith 795

Question put, and agreed to.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 8, line 28, alfter '1853,' to insert the words 'or the rules prescribed by Schedule D in the Income-tax Act, 1842.' "—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

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Question put, and agreed to, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. Asquith 796

Amendment proposed—

"In page 8, line 30, after the word 'vocation,' to insert the words, 'either as an individual, or, in the case of a partnership, as a partner personally acting therein.'"—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and agreed to.

Mr. Hicks Beach 796

Amendment proposed—

"In page 8, line 30, to insert the words, 'or any income derived by a landowner from farming of his own land.'"—(*Mr. Hicks Beach.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."
Mr. Asquith 797
Mr. A. J. Balfour 798
Mr. A. L. Stanley (Cheshire, Eddisbury) 799
Viscount Helmsley (York, N.R., Thirsk) 800
Mr. Lupton 800

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 85 ; Noes, 263. (Division List No. 268.)

Mr. Bridgeman (Shropshire, Oswestry) 803

Amendment proposed—
"In page 8, line 30, at the end to insert the words '(*d*) any income arising from patent rights or copyrights which is immediately derived by the inventor or author of the works in respect of which the rights are held.'"—(*Mr. Bridgeman.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted

Mr. Austen Chamberlain 805

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. Fell (Gt. Yarmouth) 805

Amendment proposed—

"In page 8, line 30, at end, to insert the words '(*d*) any income arising from investments which have been made out of savings from income derived from the exercise of any trade, profession, or vocation ; (*e*) any annuity which has been purchased out of savings from income derived as in the last sub-section."—(*Mr. Fell.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. Asquith 806
Mr. Hicks Beach 806

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Sir F. Banbury 806

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 78 ; Noes, 252. (Division List No. 269.)

Amendment proposed—

> "In page 8, line 33, at the end, to add the words '(8) Section thirty-four of The Finance Act, 1894, shall cease to have effect so far as it gives relief or abatement to persons who are entitled to relief under Section eight of The Finance Act, 1898.' "—(*Mr. Asquith*).

Question, "That those words be there added," put, and agreed to.

Question proposed, "That the clause, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

Mr. Austen Chamberlain 811
Mr. Asquith 811

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Committee report Progress ; to sit again upon Monday next.

PROCEDURE (ANTICIPATORY MOTIONS).

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to consider and report upon the Procedure of the House in relation to Anticipatory Motions and Bills.

Committee accordingly nominated of—Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Robert Cecil, Mr. Ellis, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. H. W. Forster, Sir Brynmor Jones, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Major Seely, and Mr. Shackleton.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Three be the Quorum.—(*Mr. Whiteley*) 812

And, it being half-past Eleven of the Clock, Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Adjourned at fourteen minutes before Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: THURSDAY, 4TH JULY, 1907.

COMMISSION.—The following Bills received the Royal Assent :—

1. Irish Tobacco.
2. Destructive Insects and Pests.
3. London Government scheme (Southwark Borough Market).
4. Marriages Provisional Order.

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5. Metropolitan Police Provisional Order.
6. Oregon Mortgage Company, Limited, Order Confirmation.
7. Canal Tolls and Charges (New Junction Canal) Order Confirmation.
8. West Riding Tramways.
9. Medway Lower Navigation.
10. Gas Companies (Removal of Sulphur Restrictions).
11. Basingstoke Gas.
12. Falmouth Gas.
13. Staveley Coal and Iron Company.
14. Weston-super-Mare Grand Pier.
15. North-East London Railway.
16. London and North-Western Railway (Superannuation Fund).
17. Plymouth and North Devon Direct Railway (Abandonment).
18. Borax Consolidated.
19. Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways.
20. Manchester Ship Canal (Bridgewater Canal).
21. West Yorkshire Tramways.
22. Mitcham and Wimbledon District Gas.
23. Birmingham Corporation.
24. Newquay and District Water.
25. Middlesbrough Corporation.
26. Royal Bank of Scotland.
27. Society of Apothecaries of London.
28. Maidstone Gas.
29. Bristol Corporation.
30. Burnley Corporation.
31. Tyne Improvement.
32. Keswick Urban District Council (Water).
33. Brecon and Merthyr Tydfil Junction Railway.
34. Port Talbot Railway and Docks.
35. Manchester Ship Canal (Various Powers).
36. Shanklin Gas.
37. South-Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways.
38. Metropolitan Railway (Pension Fund).
39. Simon-Carves Bye Product Coke oven Construction and Working Company, Limited.

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40. Grays and Tilbury Gas.

41. Brockenhurst Gas.

42. Boston Spa Gas.

43. Harrison's Patent.

44. St. Neot's Urban District Council.

45. Sutton Coldfield Rectory.

46. Birmingham Corporation Water.

47. Great Yarmouth Port and Haven.

48. Taff Vale Railway.

49. General Accident Fire and Life Assurance Corporation, Limited.

50. Ocean Accident and Guarantee Corporation.

51. Baine's Name.

52. Murphy Grimshaw's Divorce (Validation) 813

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE.—The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that His Majesty had (by Commission) appointed the Earl Beauchamp Speaker of the House in the absence of the Lord Chancellor, or Lord Keeper, the Earl of Onslow, the Earl of Halsbury, the Earl of Waldegrave, the Lord Ribblesdale, the Lord Balfour of Burleigh, and the Lord Loreburn. The said Commission was read 814

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Rawtenstall Corporation Bill.—Read 3ª, with the Amendments; and passed, and returned to the Commons 814

Bude Gas Bill.—Consent of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, signified and Bill reported, with Amendments 815

City of London (Union of Parishes) Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 815

Land Drainage Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill; Land Drainage Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill.—Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to 815

Aberdeen Corporation Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.].—A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order relating to Aberdeen Corporation was presented by the Earl Beauchamp for the Lord Hamilton of Dalzell (pursuant to the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, Sections 8 and 9); read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 93.) 815

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill.—Moved, That the order made on the 20th day of March last, "That no Provisional Order Confirmation Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after the 18th day of June next," be dispensed with, and that the Bill be now read 2ª; agreed to. Bill read 2ª accordingly, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection in regard to the Dunstable Order 815

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]; Tramways Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.].—Amendments reported (according to order); and Bills to be read 3ª on Monday next 815

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill.—Read 3ª (according to order) and passed 815

Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill [H.L.].—(Fleetwood Victoria Pier Order); Barry Railway Bill; Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway (General Powers) Bill; North Staffordshire Railway Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill—(Dunstable Order).—Report from the Committee of Selection, that the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills; viz.,

E. Eldon.
L. Zouche of Haryngworth.
L. Manners.
L. Lyveden.
L. Brougham and Vaux (chairman).

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly: The Committee to meet on Wednesday next, at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills .. 815

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill.—Read 1ª; to be printed, and referred to the Examiners. (No. 94.) 816

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3848. France (Budget for 1907).
No. 3849. United States (New Orleans).
No. 3850. Western Pacific (Friendly Islands).
No. 3851. Turkey (Erzeroum) 816

MINT.—Thirty-seventh Annual Report of the Deputy Master and Comptroller of the Mint, 1906.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 816

BRITISH AND FOREIGN SHIPPING.

Lord Muskerry 816
The Earl of Granard 816

THE INFANTRY MILITIA.

The Earl of Donoughmore 817

Qualification of Women (County and Borough Councils) Bill [H.L.].

Order of the day read for resuming the adjourned debate on Lord Belper's Amendment to the Motion that the House do now resolve itself into Committee, viz., that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee; and that it be an Instruction to the said Committee to consider and

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report whether the co-operation of women in certain matters of local government entrusted to county and borough councils might not be more effectively secured by methods other than that of election by the council as aldermen or by the ratepayers as councillors.

Earl Cawdor 817
Lord Zouche of Haryngworth 821
The Lord President of the Council (*The Earl of Crewe*) 823
Lord James of Hereford 825
Lord Belper 825

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

House in Committee (according to Order).

[The Earl of ONSLOW in the Chair].

Moved, " That the House do resume."—(*The Earl of Crewe*).

On Question, Motion agreed to.

STATE OF THE NAVY.

Earl Cawdor 830
The First Lord of the Admiralty (*Lord Tweedmouth*) 832
Lord Brassey 840
Earl Cawdor 841

House adjourned at Six o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: THURSDAY, 4TH JULY, 1907.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz. :—Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No. 2) Bill [Lords].

Ordered, that the Bill be read a second time to-morrow 842

Southend Water Bill [LORDS]; Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [Lords].—Read the third time, and passed with Amendments 842

North British Railway Bill [LORDS] (BY ORDER).—Read a second time, and committed 842

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill(By Order).
—Read the third time, and passed 842

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time to-morrow 842

Educational Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Surrey, etc.) Bill [Lords].—Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time to-morrow 842

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill [Lords].—Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time to-morrow 842

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill [Lords].—Reported without Amendment [Provisional Order confirmed] Report to lie upon the table.

Bill to be read the third time to-morrow 842

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 4) Bill [Lords].—Reported without Amendment [Provisional Order confirmed]: Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time To-morrow 842

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill.—Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time to-morrow 843

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill.—Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill, as amended, to be considered to-morrow 843

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 12) Bill.—Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill, as amended, to be considered to-morrow 843

Local Government Provisional Order (No. 15) Bill.—Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Order confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill, as amended, to be considered to-morrow 843

Ashton-under-Lyne, Stalybridge, and Dunkinfield (District) Waterworks Bill [Lords].—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 843

Pontypridd Urban District Council Bill [Lords].—Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Bill to be read the third time 843

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United Methodist Church Bill [LORDS].—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 241.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Select Committee to be printed. [No. 241.] 843

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.—That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to prohibit Joint Stock Companies from acting as Physicians, Surgeons, or Medical Practitioners." [Prohibition of Medical Practice by Companies Bill [Lords].

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confirm a Provisional Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Dundee Corporation."—[Dundee Corporation Order Confirmation Bill [Lords] 843

Dundee Corporation Order Confirmation Bill [LORDS].—Read the first time; and ordered, under Section 9 of The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 266.] 844

PETITIONS.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC (LOCAL OPTION) (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Glasgow, in favour; to lie upon the Table 844

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.—Petition from Dulwich, against; to lie upon the Table 844

PUBLIC HEALTH (REGULATIONS AS TO FOOD) BILL.—Petition from Inverness, in favour; to lie upon the Table 844

SMALL LANDHOLDER'S (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Peebleshire, for alteration; to lie upon the Table 844

WEEKLY REST-DAY BILL.—Petition from Harringay and other places, in favour; to lie upon the Table 844

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

MINT.—Copy presented, of Thirty-seventh Annual Report of the Deputy-Master and Comptroller of the Mint, 1906 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table .. 844

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies Presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3848 to 3851 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 844

GAS AND WATER WORKS FACILITIES ACT 1870.—Copy presented, of Report by the Board of Trade as to dispensing with the consent of the Nazeing parish council in the case of the Herts and Essex Water Provisional Order [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 239.] 844

BOARD OF EDUCATION.—Copy presented, of Regulations for the Training of Teachers and for the Examination of Students in Training Colleges [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 845

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

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Female Workers in the Post Office.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell (Longford, N.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 845

Queen's Barracks, Perth.—Questions, Major Anstruther-Gray (St. Andrews Burghs), and Mr. Claude Hay (Shoreditch, Hoxton); Answers, Mr. Haldane 845

Maryhill Barracks.—Question, Mr. Cochrane (Ayrshire, N.); Answer, Mr. Haldane 846

Unclaimed Moneys in the Court of Chancery.—Question, Mr. Parker (Halifax); Answer, Mr. Runciman 846

Unclaimed Dividends.—Question, Mr. Parker; Answer, Mr. Runciman .. 849

Ailsa Craig.—Question, Mr. J. D. White (Dumbartonshire); Answer, Mr. Sinclair 849

Bass Rock.—Question, Mr. J. D. White; Answer, Mr. Sinclair 850

Hyskeir Rock.—Question, Mr. J. D. White; Answer, Mr. Sinclair 850

Templemore Artillery Depot.—Question, Mr. Guy Baring (Winchester); Answer, Mr. Haldane 850

Agricultural Organisation Society.—Question, Mr. Watt (Glasgow College); Answer, Sir Edward Strachey 851

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Kikuya Hut Tax.—Question, Viscount Castlereagh (Maidstone); Answer, Mr. Churchill 854

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Moray Firth Fisheries.—Question, Sir Arthur Bignold (Wick Burghs); Answer, Mr. Sinclair 854

Income Tax on Charities.—Question, Mr. R. Pearce (Staffordshire, Leek); Answer, Mr. Asquith 854

Madras Police.—Question, Sir Seymour King (Hull, Central); Answer, Mr. Morley 855

East Bengal Railway Robbery.—Question, Major Anstruther-Gray; Answer, Mr. Morley 855

Cookstown Estate in Chancery.—Question, Mr. Kettle (Tyrone, E.); Answer, Mr. Birrell 855

Irish Land Purchase and Land Stock.—Question, Mr. Ffrench (Wexford, S.); Answer, Mr. Birrell 856

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QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

RETURN OF BRITISH AND FOREIGN FLEETS.—Questions, Mr. Bellairs (Lynn Regis), Mr. Cowan (Surrey, Guildford); Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee) 856

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EGYPTIAN PUBLIC COMPANIES.—Question, Mr. J. M. Robertson; Answer, Sir Edward Grey 863

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MACEDONIAN OUTRAGES.—Question, Mr. Alden (Middlesex, Tottenham); Answer, Sir E. Grey 864

TERMINABLE ANNUITIES.—Question, Mr. Myer (Lambeth, N.); Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, E.) 864

THE SUGAR DUTY.—Question, Mr. Fell (Great Yarmouth); Answer, Mr. Asquith 865

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SCOTSTOUN (GLASGOW) POST OFFICE.—Question, Mr. Barnes (Glasgow, Blackfriars); Answer, The Postmaster-General (Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar) 868

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ILLEGALLY ENCLOSED COMMON LAND.—Question, Sir J. Jardine (Roxburghshire); Answer, The Treasurer of the Household (Sir Edward Strachey, Somersetshire, S.) 874

MEAT AND MILK SUPPLIES FROM DISEASED COWS.—Question, Mr. Bramsdon; Answer, Sir Edward Strachey 875

INNISTIOGUE FISHERY KILKENNY.—Question, Mr. Meagher (Kilkenny, N.); Answer, The Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture for Ireland (Mr. T. W. Russell, Tyrone, S.) 875

ILLEGAL TRAWLING OFF THE COAST OF KERRY.—Question, Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.); Answer, Mr. T. W. Russell 876

BELFAST MUNICIPAL TECHNICAL INSTITUTE.—Question, Mr. J. Devlin (Belfast, W.); Answer, Mr. T. W. Russell 877

CAHIRCIVEEN TRAWLING PROSECUTION.—Question, Mr. Boland; Answer, Mr. T. W. Russell 877

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Tuberculosis Notification in Belfast.—Question, Mr. J. Devlin; Answer, Mr. Birrell .. 879

Tullamore Unlawful Assembly Trial.—Question, Mr. Lonsdale (Armagh Mid); Answer, Mr. Birrell .. 880

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Thomastown Cattle Raid Prosecution.—Question, Mr. Lonsdale; Answer, Mr. Birrell .. 881

Irish Licensing Act.—Question, Mr. J. Devlin; Answer, Mr. Birrell .. 881

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Skibbereen Smuggling Case.—Question, Captain Craig; Answer, Mr. Runciman .. 884

Killylea Postmaster.—Question, Mr. Kilbride (Kildare, N.); Answer, Mr Sydney Buxton .. 885

Swine Fever.—Question, Mr. Boland; Answer, Sir E. Strachey .. 885

Diseases of Animals Act Regulations.—Question, Mr. Boland; Answer, Sir Edward Strachey .. 886

Business of the House.—Questions, Mr. Akers-Douglas (Kent, St. Augustine's), Mr. Soares (Devonshire, Barnstaple), Mr. Moore (Armagh, N.), and Mr. Crooks (Woolwich); Answers, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs) .. 887

Lights on Vehicles Bill.—Consideration, as amended (by the Standing Committee), deferred from Monday next till Thursday next .. 888

Parliamentary Debates.—Report from the Select Committee with Minutes of Evidence, and an Appendix, brought up, and read.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 240.] .. 888

NEW BILL.

Bankruptcy (Scotland) Bill.—"To consolidate and amend the Law of Bankruptcy in Scotland," presented by Mr. Cleland; supported by Mr. Bonar Law, Mr. Watt, Mr. Dundas White, Mr. Menzies, and Mr. M'Callum; to be read a second time upon Friday, 19th July, and to be printed. [Bill 267] .. 888

SUPPLY [15TH ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1907–8.

CLASS IV.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £2,200, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1908, for a Grant-in-Aid of the Expenses of the Queen's Colleges in Ireland."

Mr. Kettle (Tyrone, E.) 888

Whereupon the Gentlemen Usher of the Black Rod, being come with a Message for the House to attend the Lords Commissioners, the Chairman left the Chair.

Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair.

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners.

The House went; and, being returned—

Mr. SPEAKER reported the Royal Assent to a number of Acts. (See page 813.)

SUPPLY.

Again considered in Committee.

Question again proposed, "That a sum not exceeding £2,200, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1908, for a Grant-in-Aid of the Expenses of the Queen's Colleges in Ireland."

Mr. Kettle 891

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £2,100, be granted for the said service."—(*Mr. Kettle.*)

Mr. Gwynn (Galway) 903
Sir E. Carson (Dublin University) 913
Mr. Gordon (Londonderry, S.) 919

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Mr. T. M. Healy (Louth, N.) 925
Mr. Gooch (Bath) 928
Mr. Butcher (Cambridge University) 931
Mr. Massie (Wiltshire, Cricklade) 937
Sir Philip Magnus (London University) 943
Mr. C. B. Harmsworth (Worcestershire, Droitwich) 947
Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.) 949
Mr. Barrie (Londonderry, N.) 952
The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.) 956
Mr. T. P. O'Connor (Liverpool, Scotland) 968
Mr. T. L. Corbett (Down, N.) 971

And, it being Eleven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

Leeds (South Parade Chapel) Charity Bill.—Not amended (by the Standing Committee), considered; to be read the third time upon Thursday next .. 972

Kingswood (Whitfield Tabernacle, Schoolroom, etc.) Charity Bill.—Not amended (by the Standing Committee), considered; to be read the third time upon Thursday next 972

Longton (Caroline Street Chapel) Charity Bill.—Not amended (by the Standing Committee), considered; to be read the third time upon Thursday next 972

Board of Education Scheme (Hulme Trust Estates Educational) Confirmation Bill.—Not amended (by the Standing Committee), considered; read the third time, and passed 972

Adjourned at five minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 5TH JULY, 1907.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Private Bills [Lords] Standing Orders not Previously Inquired into Complied With.—Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Alton Military Hospital Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 973

Private Bills [Lords] Standing Orders not Previously Inquired into not Complied With.—Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have not been complied with, viz. :—Broadstairs and St. Peter's Urban District Water Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 973

Hull and Barnsley Railway Bill.—Lords' Amendments considered, and agreed to 973

Burnham (Somerset) Pier Bill [Lords].—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments 973

Kendal Corporation Bill [Lords].—As amended, to be considered upon Monday next 973

King Edward's Hospital Fund for London Bill [Lords].—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments 973

Dundee Corporation Order Confirmation Bill [Lords].—Read a second time; and ordered to be considered upon Tuesday next 974

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No. 2) Bill [Lords].—Read a second time, and committed 974

PETITIONS.

Education (Scotland) Bill.—Petition from Kirriemuir, for alteration; to lie upon the Table 974

Liquor Traffic (Local Option) (Scotland) Bill.—Petition of the General Assembly of the United Free Church of Scotland, in favour; to lie upon the Table 974

Small Landholders (Scotland) Bill.—Petitions in favour: From Alva; Canisbay; Causewayhead; Clackmannan; Clackmannanshire; Cleish; Culross; Dollar; Ferry Port on Craig; Fossaway; Orwell; Portmoak; Sauchie; Tillicoultry; and, Tulliallan; to lie upon the Table.. 974

Weekly Rest-day Bill.—Petition from Harlesden and other places, in favour; to lie upon the Table 974

Women's Enfranchisement Bill.—Petition from Stockport, in favour; to lie upon the Table 974

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Judicature Committee.—Copy presented, of Resolutions of the Judicature Committee, on 21st June, 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table .. 974

Imperial Revenue (Collection and Expenditure) (Great Britain and Ireland).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 16th April; Mr. J. A. Pease]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 242.] 974

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SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1884.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 6th November, 1906, declaring that Richard Black, Labourer, Royal Gun Factory, War Office, was appointed without a Civil Service Certificate through inadvertence on the part of the Head of his Department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 974

ARMY.—Copy presented, of (1) War Office Report on the steps taken to provide Technical Instruction to Soldiers to fit them for civil life, and (2) Copies of War Office Circular Letters relating to the subject [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 975

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).—Copy presented, of Regulations as to Grants to Secondary Schools [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 975

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

POSTMEN ACTING AS INSPECTORS OF TELEGRAPH MESSENGERS AT SALISBURY.—Question, Mr. James O'Connor (Wicklow, W.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 975

POSTAL APPOINTMENTS—CASE OF PETER KELLY OF TULLAMORE.—Question, Mr. James O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 975

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—EXAMINATION FOR PROMOTION.—Question, Mr. Moore (Armagh, N.); Answer, Mr. Birrell 976

IRISH EDUCATION.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Birrell .. 976

WAR OFFICE COMMITTEES—COST AND COMPOSITION.—Question, Viscount Castlereagh (Maidstone); Answer, Mr. Haldane 977

NEW WRIT.—New Writ for the County of York (West Riding, Colne Valley Division), in the room of the Right Hon. Sir James Kitson, Baronet (Manor of Northstead).—(*Mr. Whiteley*) 977

FINANCE [LOCAL TAXATION GRANTS].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That if the rate of duty on any local taxation licence (including any duty charged under sub-section (1) of section eight of the Locomotives on Highways Act, 1896) is hereafter increased, there shall be added to the amounts payable to the local taxation account out of the Consolidated Fund such sums (if any) as may be required to bring the amount payable in any year to the local taxation account up to the amount which would have been payable if the proceeds of that duty in that year were taken to be the average proceeds of the duty for the three years ending March the thirty-first, nineteen hundred and seven, and if the sum ascertained to have been collected in that year in any county in England in respect of that duty were taken to be the average sum so ascertained to have been collected for the three years ending March the thirty-first, nineteen hundred and seven.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next 978

LAND PURCHASE (IRELAND) (FINANCE).

Mr. John Redmond (*Waterford*) 978
Mr. Ginnell (*Westmeath, N.*) 986

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, the method at present in force for providing money for land purchase in Ireland has broken down in practice, and, if persisted in, will throw such a ruinous charge on the already overburdened ratepayers of Ireland as to endanger the entire scheme of land purchase."—(*Mr. John Redmond.*)

Mr. Moore (*Armagh, N.*) 992
Mr. John O'Connor (*Kildare, N.*) 994
The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (*Mr. Runciman, Dewsbury*) .. 999
Mr. Ainsworth (*Argyllshire*) 1003
Mr. T. M. Healy (*Louth, N.*) 1005
Mr. Flynn (*Cork, N.*) 1009
The Chief Secretary for Ireland (*Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.*) 1010
Mr. Wyndham (*Dover*) 1018
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (*Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, E.*) 1025
Sir F. Banbury (*City of London*) 1029
Mr. Clancy (*Dublin County, N.*) 1032
Mr. Gordon (*Londonderry, S.*) 1034
Mr. Patrick White (*Meath, N.*) 1035

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, That, in the opinion of this House, the method at present in force for providing money for land purchase in Ireland has broken down in practice, and, if persisted in, will throw such a ruinous charge on the already overburdened ratepayers of Ireland as to endanger the entire scheme of land purchase.—(*Mr. John Redmond.*)

Post Office Sites (Recommitted) Bill.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 :—

Sir F. Banbury 1036

And, it being Five of the clock, the CHAIRMAN left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress ; to sit again upon Monday next.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection ; that they had discharged the following Member from Standing Committee B. (in respect of the Telegraph (Money) Bill) : Mr. Massie ; and had appointed in substitution (in respect of the Telegraph (Money) Bill : Sir John Benn.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee ; that they had added to Standing Committee B. the following Member (in respect of the Telegraph (Money) Bill) ; Mr. Wardle.

Reports to lie upon the Table 1036

Coventry Corporation Bill.—Reported with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1036

Whereupon Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to Standing Order No. 3.

Adjourned at three minutes after Five o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS: MONDAY, 8TH JULY, 1907.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that no Standing Orders are applicable to the following Bills: Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 14).

The same were ordered to lie on the Table 1037

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.—Report from, that the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Central London Railway Bill ought to be dispensed with, and the Bill allowed to proceed.

Read, and agreed to 1037

Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill [H.L.].—Witnesses ordered to attend the Select Committee 1037

London and North Western Railway Bill.—Reported from the Select Committee with Amendments 1037

North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill.—Moved, That the Order made on the 20th day of March last, "That no Private Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after the 18th day of June next," be dispensed with, and that the Bill be now read 2ª; agreed to: Bill read 2ª accordingly, and committed 1037

Great Central Railway Bill.—Read 3ª, with the Amendments; and passed, and returned to the Commons 1037

Great Northern and City Railway Bill.—Read 3ª, with the Amendment, and passed, and returned to the Commons 1037

Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [H.L.]; King Edward's Hospital Fund for London Bill [H.L.].—Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments 1037

Southend Water Bill [H.L.]; Burnham (Somerset) Pier Bill [H.L.].—Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments: The said Amendments considered, and agreed to 1037

Hull and Barnsley Railway Bill.—Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to 1038

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Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill [H.L.].—(Fleetwood Victoria Pier Order); Barry Railway Bill; Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway (General Powers) Bill; North Staffordshire Railway Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill—(Dunstable Order). Report from the Committee of Selection. That the Lord Southampton be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Zouche of Haryngworth; read, and agreed to 1038

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]; Tramways Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.].—Read 3ª (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons 1038

Board of Education Scheme (Hulme Trust Estates Educational) Confirmation Bill.—Brought from the Commons and read 1ª; to be printed, and referred to the Examiners. [No. 96.] 1038

PETITIONS.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.—Petition that in any scheme of the Board, the rights of headmasters in secondary schools may be safeguarded, of Thomas Allen; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 1038

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

SOUTH AFRICA.—Papers relating to a Federation of the South African Colonies .. 1038

NATAL.—Correspondence relating to the removal of certain native prisoners from Natal. (In continuance of [Cd. 3247] December, 1906) 1038

BOARD OF EDUCATION (TRAINING COLLEGES).—Regulations for the training of teachers and for the examination of students in training colleges 1039

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) 1907.—Regulations as to grants to secondary schools .. 1039

ARMY.—(1) War Office Report on the steps taken to provide technical instruction to soldiers to fit them for civil life; (2) Copies of War Office circular letters relating to the subject.

Report of the War Office Committee appointed to discuss certain Militia questions with representative officers of Militia 1039

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION.—Fifty-first Report of His Majesty's Civil Service Commissioners; with appendices 1039

COMMERCIAL, No. 6 (1907) (SUEZ CANAL).—Returns of Shipping and tonnage, 1904, 1905 and 1906. (In continuation of "Commercial, No. 4, 1906.") .. 1039

GOVERNMENT LABORATORY.—Report of the principal chemist upon the work of the Government Laboratory, for the year ended 31st March, 1907; with appendices.

Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table 1039

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GAS AND WATER WORKS FACILITIES ACTS, 1890.—Report by the Board of Trade of the grounds upon which they have dispensed with the consent of the Nazeing Parish Council in the case of the Herts and Essex Water Provisional Order 1039

SUPERANNUATION.—Treasury Minute, dated 1st July, 1907, declaring that Richard Blake, labourer, Royal Gun Factory, War Office, was appointed without a Civil Service certificate through inadvertence on the part of the head of his Department 1039

LUNACY.—Return to the Lord Chancellor of the number of visits made, and the number of patients seen, by the several Commissioners in Lunacy during the six months ended 30th June, 1907.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 1039

RAILWAY SERVANTS (HOURS OF LABOUR).—Return in pursuance of Section 4 of the Regulations of Railways Act, 1889, of railway servants of certain classes who were on one or more occasions during the month of April, 1907, on duty on the railways of the United Kingdom for more than twelve hours at a time, or who after being on duty more than twelve hours were allowed to resume work with less than nine hours' rest : Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table 1040

STANDING ORDERS OF THE HOUSE, ETC.—Report from the Select Committee (with the proceeding of the Committee) made, and to be printed ; Minutes of Evidence, together with an Appendix, laid on the Table, and to be delivered out [No. 95.] 1040

NEW BILL.

Qualification of Women (County and Town Councils) (Scotland) Bill [H.L.].—A Bill to amend the law relating to the capacity of women to be elected and act as members of county or town councils in Scotland was presented by the Lord Hamilton of Dalzell ; read 1^{a} ; to be printed ; and to be read 2^{a} on Monday next. [No. 97.] 1040

Territorial and Reserve Forces Bill.—Order of the Day read for the House being put into Committee.

Moved, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee."—(*The Earl of Portsmouth.*)

Viscount Hardinge 1040
The Earl of Mount Edgcumbe 1042
The Under-Secretary of State for War (*The Earl of Portsmouth*) 1043
Lord Clonbrock 1046
The Duke of Northumberland 1046
The Marquess of Lansdowne 1048
The Lord President of the Council (*The Earl of Crewe*) 1049
The Marquess of Salisbury 1050
The Lord Privy Seal (*The Marquess of Ripon*) 1052

House in Committee, according to Order.

[The EARL of ONSLOW in the Chair.]

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Clause 1:—

The Earl of Portsmouth 1052

Amendment moved—

"In page 1, line 8, after the word 'Regulars,' to insert the words 'and their Reserves.'"—(*The Earl of Portsmouth.*)

The Earl of Mount Edgcumbe 1055
The Duke of Northumberland 1056
The Earl of Camperdown 1056

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

The Duke of Northumberland 1057

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 1, after the words 'county or' to insert the words 'if he do not assent then.'"—(*The Duke of Northumberland.*)

The Earl of Portsmouth 1058
The Earl of Crewe 1059
The Earl of Harewood 1060
Lord Newton 1060
The Marquess of Lansdowne 1060
The Secretary of State for the Colonies (*The Earl of Elgin*) 1061

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 1, after the word 'or,' to insert the words 'failing him.'"—(*The Duke of Northumberland.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Lord Zouche of Haryngworth 1061

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 7, to leave out 'one-half,' and to insert 'two-thirds.'"—(*Lord Zouche of Haryngworth.*)

The Earl of Portsmouth 1062
Lord Raglan 1063
Lord Harris 1064
The Marquess of Lansdowne 1064

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Lord Belper 1065

Amendment moved—

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Amendment moved—

"In page 3, line 12, to leave out the word 'Yeomanry.' "—(*The Earl of Scarbrough.*)

Earl Roberts 1098
Lord Leigh 1100
The Earl of Essex 1101
Lord Lovat 1103
The Earl of Portsmouth 1103
Lord Methuen 1109
Viscount Midleton 1110
The Earl of Granard 1114
Lord Lovat 1115
Lord Harris 1117
The Earl of Crewe 1119
Lord Montagu of Beaulieu 1121
The Duke of Marlborough 1122
Earl Fortescue 1124
The Marquess of Lansdowne 1124
The Earl of Scarbrough 1126

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Consequential Amendment agreed to.

On Question, that Clause 1, as amended, stand part of the Bill.

The Earl of Donoughmore 1126
The Earl of Portsmouth 1127

Clause 1, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 2 :—

Lord Montagu of Beaulieu 1127

Amendment moved—

"In page 3, line 23, after the word 'organisation,' to insert the word 'equipment.' "—(*Lord Montagu of Beaulieu.*) 1127

The Earl of Portsmouth 1127

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Lord Lovat 1128

Amendment moved—

"In page 4, line 6, to leave out from the word 'training' to the end of paragraph (*e*)."—(*Lord Lovat.*)

The Earl of Portsmouth 1128
Lord Lovat 1128

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

House resumed, and to be again in Committee To-morrow.

House adjourned at half-past Eleven o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: MONDAY, 8TH JULY, 1907.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Private Bills [Lords] (Standing Orders not Previously Inquired into Complied with).—Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Portishead District Water Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 1129

Brighouse Corporation Bill.—Lords' Amendments considered, and agreed to 1129

Fitzgerald's Divorce Bill [Lords].—Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment 1129

Heywood and Middleton Water Board Bill [Lords].—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments 1129

Wisbech Water Bill [Lords].—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 1129

Colne Valley Water Bill [Lords]; Electric Supply Corporation Bill [Lords]; Killery's Divorce Bill [Lords]; Pasley Children Legitimisation Bill [Lords].—Read a second time and committed 1129

Kendal Corporation Bill [Lords] (By Order).—As amended, considered; an Amendment made; Bill to be read the third time 1129

Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Surrey, etc.) Bill [Lords] (by Order); Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill [Lords] (by Order); Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill [Lords] (by Order); Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 4) Bill [Lords] (by Order).—Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment 1130

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill (By Order); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill (by Order).—Read the third time, and passed 1130

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Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill (By Order); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 12) Bill (by Order); Local Government Provisional Order (No. 15) Bill (by Order).—As amended, considered; to be read the third time To-morrow 1130

Killery's Divorce Bill [Lords].—Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Lords to request that their Lordships will be pleased to communicate to this House Copies of the Minutes of Evidence and Proceedings, together with Documents deposited, in the case of Killery's Divorce Bill [Lords] .. 1130

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Select Committee on Divorce Bills, that they do hear Counsel and examine Witnesses for Killery's Divorce Bill [Lords], and also that they do hear Counsel and examine Witnesses against the Bill, if the parties concerned think fit to be heard by Counsel and produce Witnesses.—(*Mr. Attorney-General*) 1130

Message from the Lords.—That they have agreed to:—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill, without Amendment; Rawtenstall Corporation Bill, with Amendments.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, " An Act to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade, under The Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Herts and Essex Water, Mid-Kent Water, and Tywford (Berks) Gas." [Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [Lords].

And also, a Bill, intituled, " An Act to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade, under the Tramways Act, 1870, relating to Audenshaw Urban District Council Tramway, Huddersfield Corporation Tramway, Leeds Corporation Tramways, Taunton Tramways (Extension), and West Ham Corporation Tramways." [Tramways Orders Confirmation Bill [Lords] 1130

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 269.] 1131

Tramways Orders Confirmation Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 270.] 1131

PETITIONS.

Liquor Traffic (Local Option) (Scotland) Bill.—Petition from Tunbridge Wells, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1131

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Army.—Copy presented, of Report of the War Office Committee appointed to discuss certain Militia Questions with Representative Officers of Militia [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1131

Natal.—Copy presented, of Correspondence relating to the Removal of certain Native Prisoners from Natal [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1131

South Africa.—Copy presented, of Papers relating to a Federation of the South African Colonies [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1131

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RAILWAY SERVANTS (HOURS OF LABOUR).—Copy presented, of Return, in pursuance of Section 4 of The Regulation of Railways Act, 1889, of Railway Servants of certain classes who were on one or more occasions during the month of April, 1907, on duty on the railways of the United Kingdom for more than twelve hours at a time; or who, after being on duty more than twelve hours were allowed to resume work with less than nine hours' rest [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1131

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION.—Copy presented, of Fifty-first Report of the Commissioners, with Appendices [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1132

GOVERNMENT LABORATORY. — Copy presented, of Report of the Principal Chemist upon the work of the Government Laboratory for the year ended 31st March, 1907, with Appendices [by Command]; to lie upon the Table .. 1132

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE (ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, AND IRELAND).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 2nd May; *Mr. John O'Connor*]; to lie upon the Table and to be printed. [No. 245] 1132

SUEZ CANAL (COMMERCIAL, No. 6, 1907).—Copy presented, of Returns of Shipping and Tonnage passing through the Suez Canal 1904, 1905 and 1906 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1132

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.—Lunacy.—Copy of Return to the Lord Chancellor of the number of visits made and the number of patients seen by the several Commissioners in Lunacy during the six months ending on the 30th of June, 1907 [by Act] 1132

EUROPEAN COUNTRIES (SECOND CHAMBERS).—Address for "Return showing in what European Countries possessing Senates, Second Chambers, or Upper Houses, such bodies are constituted on the hereditary principle and generally as to what constitutional disputes (if any) have arisen during the last ten years between the Upper and Lower Houses of the various European Legislatures."—(*Mr. Edward Dunne.*) 1132

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

INCOME-TAX ON COLONIAL GOVERNMENT STOCK.—Question, Mr. Soares (Devonshire, Barnstaple); Answer, Mr. Asquith 1132

OVERTIME PAY IN HORSHAM POST OFFICE.—Question, Viscount Turnour (Sussex, Horsham); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1133

SUPPLY OF MEAT TO THE ARMY.—Questions, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick); Answers, Mr. Haldane 1133

SUGGESTED CONSTRUCTION OF A BRIDGE AT THE INNER DUNDRUM HARBOUR.—Question, Captain Craig (Down, E.); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1133

ABSORPTION OF THE MILITIA INTO THE REGULAR ARMY.—Question, Mr. Hunt (Shropshire, Ludlow); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1135

DELIVERY OF POSTAL PARCELS IN EGYPT.—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.); Answer, Sir Edward Grey 1135

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RATEABLE VALUE OF ROSYTH.—Question, Mr. J. D. White (Dumbartonshire); Answer, Mr. Sinclair 1136

MONEY RAISED IN IRELAND FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.—Question, Mr. O'Shee (Waterford, W.); Answer, Mr. T. W. Russell 1136

IRISH SALMON HATCHERIES—EXPENDITURE AND CONTRIBUTION.—Question, Mr. O'Shee; Answer, Mr. T. W. Russell 1138

BORACIC ACID AS A FOOD PRESERVATIVE.—Question, Mr. Carr-Gomm (Southwark, Rotherhithe); Answer, Mr. John Burns 1141

DISPOSAL OF HOUSE REFUSE AT SEVEN KINGS, ILFORD —Question, Colonel Lockwood (Essex, Epping); Answer, Mr. J. Burns 1141

PUBLIC SHOOTING RIGHTS OVER FORESHORE AT MUCKINISH POINT, COOPE HILL.—Question, Mr. O'Shaughnessy (Limerick, W.); Answer, Mr. Kearley .. 1142

LEAVE OF ASSISTANT CLERKS.—Question, Mr. Hunt; Answer, Mr. Runciman .. 1143

REBUILDING OF LICENSED PREMISES.—Question, Mr. Horniman (Chelsea); Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1143

FOOD AND STOCK EXCHANGE GAMBLING, SUGGESTED STAMP DUTY.—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Mr. Asquith 1144

DEATHS FROM PLAGUE IN INDIA.—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Mr. Morley .. 1144

VETERINARY SURGEONS AND MEDICAL OFFICERS OF HEALTH.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Birrell 1145

EVICTIONS AT HILLSBOROUGH, COUNTY ANTRIM.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr. Birrell 1145

ENTRY AND TRAINING OF NAVAL OFFICERS.—Question, Mr. Barnes (Glasgow, Blackfriars); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1146

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS, FAIR WAGE CLAUSE.—Question, Mr. Steadman (Finsbury, Central); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1146

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

FLEET LOGS.—Question, Mr. Bellairs (Lynn Regis); Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee) 1147

GERMAN NAVAL RETURNS.—Question, Mr. Mond (Chester); Answer, Mr. Mr. Edmund Robertson 1148

TORPEDO BOAT WRECK OFF BERRY HEAD.—Question, Mr. Layland-Barratt (Devonshire, Torquay); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1148

NAVAL RATINGS.—Question, Sir Berkeley Sheffield (Lincolnshire, Brigg); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1148

FLEET RETURNS.—Question, Sir Gilbert Parker (Gravesend); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1149

H.M.S. "Defence."—Question, Mr. Nield (Middlesex, Ealing); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson .. 1149

CHINESE STOKERS ON BRITISH SHIPS.—Question, Mr. Bellairs, Mr. Lea (St. Pancras, E.); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson .. 1150

THE "BLAKE" AND THE "BLENHEIM."—Question, Mr. Bellairs; Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson .. 1150

THE FLEET AND CROMARTY FIRTH.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs) .. 1151

FOREIGN POTENTATES AND THE BRITISH ARMY.—Question, Mr. Lea; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Haldane, Haddington) .. 1151

MILITARY BANDS AT POLITICAL GATHERINGS.—Question, Mr. Branch (Middlesex, Enfield); Answer, Mr. Haldane .. 1152

LYDDITE SHELLS.—Question, Mr. Bellairs; Answer, Mr. Haldane .. 1153

LANCE CORPORALS.—Question, Mr. Ashley (Lancashire, Blackpool); Answer, Mr. Haldane .. 1153

SOLDIERS' KITS.—Question, Mr. Ashley; Answer, Mr. Haldane .. 1153

SIEGE GUNS FOR THE TERRITORIAL FORCE.—Question, Mr. Ashley; Answer, Mr. Haldane .. 1153

REGIMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS.—Question, Mr. Ashley; Answer, Mr. Haldane .. 1153

BOMBAY POLITICAL SERVICE.—Question, Mr. Hart-Davies (Hackney, N.); Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Mr. Morley, Montrose Burghs) .. 1154

MADRAS RAILWAY.—Question, Sir Lewis McIver (Edinburgh, W.); Answer, Mr. Morley .. 1154

SLAVERY ON THE ZANZIBAR COAST.—Questions, Mr. Hart-Davies, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answers, The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Churchill, Manchester, N.W.) .. 1155

EAST AFRICAN CONCESSIONS.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland); Answer, Mr. Churchill .. 1155

SOUTH AFRICAN FEDERATION—LORD SELBORNE'S CORRESPONDENCE.—Questions, Sir Gilbert Parker, Mr. Molteno (Dumfriesshire); Answers, Mr. Churchill .. 1156

SUGAR CONVENTION PAPERS.—Question, Sir Gilbert Parker; Answer, Mr. Churchill .. 1156

CHAINING OF WEST AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL PRISONERS.—Question, Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.); Answer, The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Runciman, Dewsbury, for Mr. Churchill) .. 1156

COLONIAL LOANS.—Question, Mr. Walrond (Devonshire, Tiverton); Answer, Mr. Runciman .. 1157

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GREAT BRITAIN AND THE SUGAR CONVENTION.—Question, Mr. Seaverns (Lambeth, Brixton); Answer, Mr. Runciman 1158

SIR H. MACLEAN.—Question, Mr. Maclean (Bath); Answer, Mr. Runciman .. 1158

CAB WHIPS.—Question, Mr. Soares (Devonshire, Barnstaple); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.) .. 1159

MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.—Question, Sir J. Randles (Cumberland, Cockermouth); Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1159

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT, 1906.—Question, Mr. Morton (Sutherland); Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1159

GERMAN CENSUS.—Question, Mr. Chiozza Money (Paddington, N.); Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. John Burns, Battersea) 1160

CONSOLIDATION OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS.—Question, Sir Ivor Herbert (Monmouthshire, S.); Answer, Mr. John Burns 1161

IMPORTED MATCH BOXES.—Question, Mr. Pickersgill (Bethnal Green, S.W.); Answer, The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Kearley, Devonport) 1161

ILLUSTRATED JOURNAL OF PATENTS.—Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, Mr. Kearley 1162

REPORT ON GERMAN ECONOMIC CONDITIONS.—Questions, Mr. Chiozza Money, Mr. Myer (Lambeth, N.); Answers, Mr. Kearley 1162

EXPORTS TO BRITISH POSSESSIONS.—Question, Mr. Remnant (Finsbury, Holborn); Answer, Mr. Kearley 1163

RAILWAY CARRIAGE OF IRISH BUTTER.—Question, Mr. Joyce (Limerick); Answer, Mr. Kearley 1163

AGRICULTURAL ORGANISATION SOCIETY OF ENGLAND.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason; Answer, The Treasurer of the Household (Sir Edward Strachey, Somersetshire, S.) 1164

SCHOOLS IN THE ISLAND OF LEWIS.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Sinclair, Forfarshire) 1164

SEA FISHERIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Sinclair .. 1165

DOG POISONING IN ROSS-SHIRE.—Questions, Mr. Weir, Mr. Smeaton (Stirlingshire); Answers, Mr. Sinclair 1165

SANITATION IN THE ISLAND OF LEWIS.—Questions, Mr. Weir, Mr. Rees (Montgomery Boroughs); Answers, Mr. Sinclair 1165

ISLAND OF LEWIS MEDICAL OFFICER.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Sinclair 1166

SCARLET FEVER AT STORNOWAY.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Sinclair 1167

SCOTTISH SCHOOL INSPECTORATE.—Question, Mr. Sutherland (Elgin Burghs); Answer, Mr. Sinclair 1167

IRISH EVICTED TENANTS.—Question, Mr. Moore (Armagh, N.); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.) 1168

CRIME IN KING'S COUNTY.—Questions, Mr. Moore, Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.); Answers, Mr. Birrell 1168

MR. LARKIN, J.P.—Question, Mr. Moore; Answer, Mr. Birrell 1169

ADARE EVICTED TENANT.—Mr. Lundon (Limerick, E.); Answer, Mr. Birrell .. 1169

KNOCKANY EVICTED TENANT.—Question, Mr. Lundon; Answer, Mr. Birrell .. 1170

POLICE PROTECTION IN IRELAND.—Questions, Mr. Lonsdale (Armagh, Mid.), Mr. Kilbride (Kildare, S.), Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny); Answers, Mr. Birrell 1170

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.—Question, Mr. Lonsdale; Answer, Mr. Birrell .. 1171

DISTRIBUTION OF IRISH POLICE.—Question, Mr. Lonsdale, ; Answer, Mr. Birrell 1172

DUBLIN CONSTABULARY RESERVE.—Questions, Mr. Lonsdale, Mr. Kilbride, Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answers, Mr. Birrell 1172

GARESBRIDGE EVICTED TENANT.—Question, Mr. Meagher (Kilkenny, N.); Answer, Mr. Birrell 1172

CAVEHILL AND WHITEWELL TRAMS, BELFAST.—Question, Mr. J. Devlin (Belfast, W.); Answer, Mr. Birrell 1173

BELFAST MUNICIPAL TRAMWAYS.—Question, Mr. J. Devlin; Answer, Mr. Birrell 1173

THE STRIKE IN BELFAST.—Question, Mr. J. Devlin; Answer, Mr. Birrell 1174

LOANS UNDER THE LABOURERS (IRELAND) ACTS.—Question, Mr. Clancy (Dublin County, N.); Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, E.) 1175

HOWTH HARBOUR.—Question, Mr. Clancy (Dublin County, N.); Answer, Mr. Runciman 1175

HAGUE CONFERENCE.—Question, Mr. Bowles (Lambeth, Norwood); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1176

THE GOVERNMENT AND THE BOUNTY QUESTION.—Question, Mr. Harold Cox (Preston); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1176

"ALL RED" ROUTE.—Question, Mr. Harold Cox; Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1177

BLACK ROD'S MESSAGES.—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answer, Mr. Speaker 1177

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they have discharged the following Member from Standing Committee A (in respect of the Petty Sessions Clerks (Ireland) Bill): Mr. Secretary Gladstone; and had appointed in substitution (in respect of the Petty Sessions Clerks (Ireland) Bill): Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland.

Report to lie upon the Table 1178

Telegraph (Money) Bill.—Reported, with Amendments, from Standing Committee B.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 243.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 243.]

Bill, as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be taken into consideration To-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 268] 1178

Evidence (Colonial Statutes) Bill.—Reported, without Amendment, from Standing Committee B.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 244.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 244.]

Bill [not amended] to be taken into consideration To-morrow 1178

RADIO-TELEGRAPHIC CONVENTION.—Report from the Select Committee, with Minutes of Evidence, brought up, and read.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 246] 1179

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (EVICTED TENANTS (IRELAND) BILL).

Motion made, and Question put, "That the proceedings on the Second Reading of the Evicted Tenants (Ireland) Bill, if under discussion at Eleven o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order (Sittings of the House):"—(*Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.*)

The House divided:—Ayes, 234; Noes, 46. (Division List No. 270) .. 1179

FINANCE (LOCAL TAXATION GRANTS).

Resolution reported, "That if the rate of duty on any local taxation licence (including any duty charged under Subsection (1) of Section 8 of the Locomotives on Highways Act, 1896) is hereafter increased, there shall be added to the amounts payable to the local taxation account out of the Consolidated Fund such sums (if any) as may be required to bring the amount payable in any year to the local taxation account up to the amount which would have been payable if the proceeds of that duty in that year were taken to be the average proceeds of the duty for three years ending March the thirty-first, nineteen hundred and

seven, and if the sum ascertained to have been collected in that year in any county in England in respect of that duty were taken to be the average sum so ascertained to have been collected for the three years ending March the thirty-first, nineteen hundred and seven."

Sir F. Banbury (City of London) 1182
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, E.) 1183

Resolution agreed to.

Evicted Tenants (Ireland) Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Moore (Armagh, N.) 1183
Mr. Barrie (Londonderry, N.) 1197

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day three months.' "—(*Mr. Moore.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

The President of the Department of Argiculture for Ireland (Mr. T. W. Russell, Tyrone, S.) 1201
Mr. Walter Long (Dublin, S.) 1214
Sir W. Nugent (Westmeath, S.) 1226
Mr. Charles Craig (Antrim, S.) 1229
Mr. Sheehan (Cork Co., Mid.) 1236
Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.) 1246
Mr. Ffrench (Wexford, S.) 1248
Mr. Ashley (Lancashire, Blackpool) 1249
Mr. John Roche (Galway, E.) 1251
Mr. Devlin (Belfast, W.) 1254
Mr. Byles (Salford, N.) 1259
Mr. James Campbell (Dublin University) 1264
Mr. John Redmond (Waterford) 1275
The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.) 1279

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 315 ; Noes, 98. (Division List No. 271.)

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Bill committed to a Committee of the Whole House for Monday next.—(*Mr Birrell.*)

And, it being after half-past Eleven of the Clock on Monday evening, Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order .

Adjourned at one minute after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: TUESDAY, 9TH JULY, 1907.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [H.L.].—Commons' Amendments considered, and agreed to 1293

Worthing Gas Bill.—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 1293

London United Tramways Bill.—Reported, without Amendment 1293

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill; Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill [H.L.]; Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill [H.L.].—Reported with Amendments, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow 1293

Penrith Urban District Council Bill; King's Norton and Northfield Urban District Council Bill.—Reported, with Amendments 1293

City of London (Union of Parishes) Bill [H.L.].—Read 3ª; Amendments made; Bill passed, and sent to the Commons 1293

Leeds Corporation Bill.—Read 3ª, with Amendments; a further Amendment made; Bill passed, and returned to the Commons 1293

Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Surrey, etc.) Bill [H.L.]; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]; Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]; Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 4) Bill [H.L.]; Fitzgerald's Divorce Bill [H.L.].—Returned from the Commons agreed to 1293

Heywood and Middleton Water Board Bill [H.L.].—Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments 1293

Brighouse Corporation Bill.—Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to 1293

Killery's Divorce Bill [H.L.].—Message from the Commons for copy of the Minutes of Evidence taken before this House, together with the proceedings, and the documents deposited in the case; ordered to be communicated with a request that they may be returned 1293

Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]—(FLEETWOOD VICTORIA PIER ORDER); Barry Railway Bill; Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway (General Powers) Bill; North Staffordshire Railway Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill—(Dunstable Order).—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Viscount Falkland be proposed to the House as a Member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Southampton; read, and agreed to 1294

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill (No. 99); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill (No. 100).—Brought from the Commons and read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the examiners .. 1294

Portobello and Musselburgh Tramways (Levenhall Extension) Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.].—Read 2ª (according to order), and (pursuant to the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899), deemed to have been reported from the Committee; and Bill to be read 3ª To-morrow .. 1294

Ladybank Sewerage, Drainage, and Water Provisional Order Bill; Clyde Navigation Order Confirmation Bill.—Read 3ª (according to order), and passed 1294

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.—Code of regulations for public elementary schools in Wales, including Monmouthshire, with Schedules, 1907 1294

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3852. Russia (Foreign trade of Russia, and trade of St. Petersburg).
No. 3853. China (Wuchow).
No. 3854. Japan (Tairen (Dalny)).
No. 3855. Uruguay (Trade and Finances) 1294

COLONIES.—Papers relating to the Brussels Sugar Convention.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 1295

NEW BILL.

Registration of Firms Bill [H.L.].—A Bill for the registration of firms and persons carrying on business under trade names. Was presented by the Lord Brassey; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 98.).. 1295

Salmon and Fresh Water Fisheries Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Standing Committee, with further Amendments. The Report of the Amendments made in Committee of the Whole House and by the Standing Committee to be received to-morrow; and Bill to be printed, as amended. (No. 101) .. 1295

THE YEOMANRY.

The Marquess of Lansdowne 1295
The Under-Secretary of State for War (*The Earl of Portsmouth*) 1295

Advertisements Regulation Bill [SECOND READING].—Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

Lord Balfour of Burleigh 1296

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

Earl Beauchamp 1297

On Question, Bill read 2ª (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

Territorial and Reserve Forces Bill.

House again in Committee (according to Order).

[The Earl of ONSLOW in the Chair.]

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Clause 4 :—

Lord Lovat 1349

Amendment moved—

"On page 5, line 39, after the word 'action' to insert 'in the organisation and administration of divisions, brigades and other military bodies.'"—(*Lord Lovat.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Viscount Esher 1350
The Earl of Portsmouth 1350

On Question, Clause 4, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 5 :—

Lord Lovat 1350

Amendment moved—

"In page 6, line 27, after the word 'Parliament' to insert the words 'Provided always that the number of men provided for by Parliament in the Territorial Forces at the passing of the Act shall be not less than the number of men actually in the Auxiliary Forces prior to the passing of such Act.'"—(*Lord Lovat.*)

The Earl of Portsmouth 1353

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause 5 agreed to.

Clause 6 :—

Lord Montagu of Beaulieu 1355

Amendment moved—

"In page 6, line 32, after the word 'pay,' to insert the words 'and allowances.'"—(*Lord Montagu of Beaulieu.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Lord Montagu of Beaulieu 1356

Amendment moved—

"In page 7, line 5, after the word 'provide' to insert the words 'for the appointment of a regular adjutant and.'"—(*Lord Montagu of Beaulieu.*)

The Earl of Portsmouth 1356
Viscount Midleton 1357
The Marquess of Salisbury 1357
The Earl of Portsmouth 1358
Earl Roberts 1359
Lord Haversham 1360
The Marquess of Lansdowne 1360
The Earl of Crewe 1360
The Earl of Donoughmore 1361
The Earl of Arran 1361
Lord Lucas 1361
The Earl of Arran 1362
Lord Montagu of Beaulieu 1362

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment moved—

"In page 7, line 6, after the word 'staff' to insert the words 'including adjutants and staff sergeants who shall be members of His Majesty's Regular forces.'"—(*Lord Montagu of Beaulieu.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 6, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 7 agreed to.

Clause 8 :—

Lord Montagu of Beaulieu 1363

Amendment moved—

"In page 8, line 37, to leave out the word 'four' and insert the word 'three.'"—(*Lord Montagu of Beaulieu.*)

The Eart of Portsmouth 1363

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

The Duke of Bedford 1364
The Earl of Portsmouth 1364

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 9 :—

The Duke of Northumberland 1365
The Earl of Portsmouth 1365

Clause agreed to.

Clause 10 :—

Lord Montagu of Beaulieu 1365

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Clause agreed to.

Clause 11 agreed to.

Clause 12 :—

Lord Raglan 1366

Amendment proposed—

"In page 11, line 35, after the word 'Kingdom' to insert the words 'the Channel Isles and the Isle of Man.'"—(*Lord Raglan.*)

The Earl of Portsmouth 1367

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 13 agreed to.

Clause 14 :—

Lord Lovat 1367

Amendment moved—

"In page 12, line 37, to leave out the word 'fifteen,' and insert the word 'eighteen.'"—(*Lord Lovat.*)

Lord Montagu of Beaulieu 1368
The Earl of Portsmouth 1369
Lord Harris 1369
The Earl of Scarborough 1369

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment moved—

"In page 12, line 37, after the word 'days,' to insert the words 'or, in the case of the mounted branch, eighteen days.'"—(*Lord Scarborough.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

On the Question that the clause, as amended, stand part of the Bill—

Lord Montagu of Beaulieu 1371
Lord Harris 1371
Lord Lucas 1372

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 15 :—

Amendment moved—

"In page 13, line 27, to leave out the word 'thirty,' and insert the word 'forty.'"—(*Viscount Midleton.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Consequential Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 16 to 20 agreed to.

Clause 21 :—

Lord Montagu of Beaulieu 1373

Amendment moved—

"In page 16, line 19, after the word 'association' to insert the words 'at the request of the officer commanding the unit to which the person belongs.'"—(*Lord Montagu of Beaulieu.*)

The Earl of Portsmouth 1373

Lord Montagu of Beaulieu 1374

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 22 :—

Lord Montagu of Beaulieu 1375

Amendment moved—

"In page 17, line 8, after the word 'jury' to insert the words 'and from serving in the office of high sheriff.'"—(*Lord Montagu of Beaulieu.*)

The Earl of Crewe 1375
Lord Montagu of Beaulieu 1377

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause agreed to.

Clauses 23 to 27 agreed to.

Clause 28 :—

Amendment moved—

"In page 20, line 4, to leave out the word 'Militia.'"—(*The Earl of Portsmouth.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Viscount Midleton 1377

Amendment moved—

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"In page 20, line 10, after the word 'accordingly' to insert the words 'provided that the said Order in Council shall specify any change in the conditions of service of the Yeomanry or Volunteer force, and that any further change shall be similarly notified by Order in Council.'"—(*Viscount Midleton.*)

The Earl of Portsmouth 1378
Viscount Midleton 1378

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

The Duke of Bedford 1379

Amendment moved—

"In page 20, line 28, after the word 'relates' to insert the words 'Provided that any land with the buildings upon it heretofore acquired by the council of any county or borough for military purposes within the meaning of the Military Lands Acts, shall be transferred to the association of the county, and the amount expended by such council in acquiring such land and buildings shall be repaid to such council by the association.'"—(*The Duke of Bedford.*)

The Earl of Portsmouth 1380
The Earl of Mount-Edgcumbe 1381
Lord Montagu of Beaulieu 1381

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause agreed to.

The Marquess of Salisbury 1382

Amendment moved—

"To insert as a new clause: '(1) From and after the passing of this Act the Militia shall become part of the Army Reserve, but shall continue in all respects to be subject to the Militia Act, 1882, except as hereinafter provided. (2) Section 12 of the Militia Act, 1882, shall not apply to any Militiaman enlisted or re-engaged after the passing of this Act, and in lieu thereof the following provision shall apply: Any part of the Militia shall be liable to serve in any part of the United Kingdom, and when embodied to serve elsewhere. (3) Any Militiaman serving at the date of the passing of this Act may make a voluntary offer, certified by his commanding officer, to serve under the same conditions as a Militiaman enlisted after the passing of this Act, and thereupon for the remainder of the term of his service the provisions of the section shall apply to him in the same manner as they apply to a Militiaman enlisted after the passing of this Act.'"—(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*)

The Earl of Portsmouth 1387
The Marquess of Salisbury 1389

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

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Clause 29 :—

Lord Harris 1390
The Earl of Portsmouth 1391

Amendment moved—

"In page 21, line 31, after the word 'reservists' to insert the words 'and a special reservist may be re-engaged, and when re-engaged shall continue subject to the terms of service appliable to special reservists.'"—(*The Earl of Portsmouth.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Amendments moved—

"In page 22, line 7, after the word 'enlisted' to insert the words 'or re-engaged.'"

"In page 22, line 10, after the word 'period' to insert as a new subsection '(5) When a proclamation ordering the Army Reserve to be called out on permanent service has been issued, it shall be lawful for His Majesty at any time thereafter by proclamation to order that all special reservists shall cease to be so called out, and thereupon the Secretary of State shall give such directions as may seem necessary or proper for carrying the said proclamation into effect.'"—(*The Earl of Portsmouth.*)

On Question, Amendments agreed to.

Clause 29, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 30 agreed to.

Clause 31 :—

The Marquess of Salisbury 1392
Lord Lucas 1393
The Marquess of Salisbury 1393
Lord Raglan 1394
Lord Lucas 1394

Clauses 30 and 31 agreed to.

Clause 32 :—

Lord Raglan 1394
The Earl of Portsmouth 1395

On Question, Clause 32 agreed to.

After Clause 32 :—

Amendment moved—

"After Clause 32, to insert the following new clause—'(1) His Majesty may by Order in Council transfer to the Army Reserve such battalions of the Militia as may be specified in the Order, and every battalion so transferred shall, from the date mentioned in the Order, be deemed to have been lawfully formed under this part of this Act as a battalion of special reservists. (2) As from the said date every officer of any battalion so transferred shall be deemed to be an officer in the reserve of officers and every man in such battalion shall be deemed to be a special reservist, and the Order may contain such provisions as may seem necessary for applying the provisions of the Reserve Forces Act, 1882, as amended by this Act, to those officers and men; provided that if any officer or man in any battalion so transferred at the time of such transfer indicates his objection, nothing in this Order shall affect his existing condition of service.' "—(*Earl of Portsmouth.*)

The Marquess of Salisbury 1396

On Question, new clause agreed to.

Clause 33 agreed to.

After Clause 33 :—

The Earl of Portsmouth 1396

Amendment moved—

" After Clause 33, to insert the following new clause :—' The acceptance of a commission as an officer in the reserve of officers shall not vacate the seat of any Members returned to serve in Parliament.' " —(*The Earl of Portsmouth*).

On Question, new clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 34 :—

Viscount Midleton 1397

Amendment moved—

" At the beginning of the clause to insert the words ' Every Order in Council required by this Act to be laid before each House of Parliament shall be so laid within forty days next after it is made, if Parliament is then sitting, or if not, within forty days after the commencement of the then next ensuing session ; and, if an address is presented to His Majesty by either House of Parliament within the next subsequent forty days on which the said House shall have sat, praying that any such Rule or Order may be annulled, His Majesty may thereupon by Order in Council annul the same, and the Order so annulled shall thenceforth become void and of no effect, but without prejudice to the validity of any proceedings which may in the meantime have been taken under the same.' "—(*Viscount Midleton.*)

The Earl of Crewe 1399
Viscount Midleton 1401
The Earl of Donoughmore 1402

On Question whether the proposed words should be there inserted.

Their Lordships divided :—Contents, 54 ; Not-Contents, 21.

The Duke of Northumberland 1403

Amendment moved—

"On page 23, line 33, to leave out the word 'Orders.'"—(*The Duke of Northumberland.*)

The Earl of Crewe 1404
The Duke of Northumberland 1406
The Marquess of Lansdowne 1406

On Question, Amendment as amended agreed to.

Clause as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 35 and 36 agreed to.

Clause 37 :—

Lord Montagu of Beaulieu 1407

Amendment moved—

"In page 24, line 25, after the word 'Governor,' to insert the words 'or Deputy-Governor.'"—(*Lord Montagu of Beaulieu.*)

The Earl of Portsmouth 1408

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 37, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 38 :—

Lord Montagu of Beaulieu 1408

Amendment moved—

"In page 25, line 21, to leave out the word 'Territorial' and insert the words 'National Guard.'"—(*Lord Montagu of Beaulieu.*)

The Earl of Portsmouth 1409

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Schedule to the Bill agreed to.

Preamble of the Bill agreed to.

The Title :—

Lord Montagu of Beaulieu 1409

Title agreed to.

Bill reported to the House, with Amendments.

Standing Committee negatived. The Report of Amendments to be received on Thursday, the 18th instant; and Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 102.)

House adjourned at a quarter before Twelve o'clock, till To-morrow, at a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 9TH JULY, 1907.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

United Methodist Church Bill [Lords].—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 1410

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 12) Bill; Local Government Provisional Order (No. 15) Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 1410

Dundee Corporation Order Confirmation Bill [Lords].—Considered; to be read the third time upon Thursday 1410

Tynemouth Corporation Water Bill [Lords].—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1410

Great Yarmouth Waterworks and Lowestoft Water and Gas Bill [Lords].—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1410

Standing Orders.—Resolution reported from the Select Committee:—"That in the case of the Broadstairs and St. Peter's Urban District Water Bill [Lords] the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill."

Resolution agreed to 1410

Message from the Lords.—That they have agreed to:—Great Northern and City Railway Bill, with an Amendment; Great Central Railway Bill, with Amendments.

Amendments to:—Southend Water Bill [Lords]; Burnham (Somerset) Pier Bill [Lords] without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to provide for the union of the parishes in the City of London into one parish, and to make better provision for the local government of the said city; and for other purposes." [City of London (Union of Parishes) Bill [Lords] 1410

City of London (Union of Parishes) Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 1411

PETITIONS.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.—Petition from Oxford, against; to lie upon the Table 1411

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.—Copy presented, of Code of Regulations for Public Elementary Schools in Wales including Monmouthshire, with Schedules, 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1411

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3852 to 3855 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1411

COLONIES.—Copy presented of Papers relating to the Brussels Sugar Convention [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1411

COUNTY COURTS (PLAINTS AND SITTINGS).—Address for "Returns from every Court in England and Wales of the total number of Plaints, etc., entered in each County Court from the 1st day of January to the 31st day of December, 1906, both days inclusive, distinguishing those not exceeding £20, those above £20 and not exceeding £50, those above £50 and not exceeding £100, and those by agreement over £100."

"And, of the Sittings of the County Courts in England and Wales holden before the Judges of such Courts in the year 1906 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper No. 255, of Session 1906)."—(*Mr. Herbert Samuel.*)

UNITED KINGDOM (TRADE, COMMERCE, AND CONDITION OF PEOPLE).—Return ordered, "for the United Kingdom for each of the years 1831, 1841, 1851, 1861, 1871, 1881, 1891, 1901, and 1906, showing the following particulars so far as available :—(1) population (millions); (2) death rate per thousand; (3) birth rate per thousand; (4) paupers, total average number, indoor and outdoor; (5) number of paupers per 10,000 of the population; (6) total cost of poor relief; (7) net passenger movement outwards to places out of Europe; (8) average Gazette price per quarter of wheat, barley, and oats; (9) average price of beef at the Metropolitan Cattle Market; (10) total value of the imports of grain, corn, and flour; (11) total value of the imports of meat, alive and dead; (12) total value of the imports of food and drink (exclusive of tobacco); (13) total value of the imports of food and drink (exclusive of tobacco) from British Colonies and Possessions; (14) total value of the imports of food and drink (exclusive of tobacco) per head of population; (15) total quantity of home-grown and imported wheat and wheat-flour retained for home consumption; (16) consumption of wheat and wheat-flour per head of population; (17) value of fish of British taking landed on the coasts of the United Kingdom; (18) net imports of merchandise (deducting re-exports), total value and value per head of population; (19) exports of the produce and manufactures of the United Kingdom, total value and value per head of the population; (20) imports of bullion and specie; (21) exports of bullion and specie; (22) income-tax, yield of each penny; (23) amount standing to credit of depositors in Post Office and Trustee Savings Banks; (24) total registered tonnage of British shipping; (25) tonnage of British shipping entered and cleared in the Foreign trade at ports in the United Kingdom; (26) tonnage of Foreign shipping entered and cleared in the Foreign trade at ports in the United Kingdom; and (27) total clearings at the London Bankers' Clearing House."—(*Mr. Essex*) 1412

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

CARRIAGE OF ENGLISH MAILS FROM EGYPT BY FRENCH BOATS.—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1413

EXTENSION OF HOURS OF POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANKS FOR THE BENEFIT OF PROVIDENT SOCIETIES.—Question, Mr. Horniman (Chelsea); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1413

WORKING OF THE CHANCERY REGISTRAR'S OFFICE—REPORT OF COMMITTEE.—Question, Mr. Stewart Smith (Westmoreland, Kendal); Answer, Sir John Walton 1414

WORKING OF THE IRISH LAND ACT—APPOINTMENTS OF STAFF.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Birrell 1414

SUGAR PRICES.—Question, Sir Gilbert Parker (Gravesend); Answer, Mr. Kearley 1416

VISIT OF THE CROFTERS COMMISSION TO ORKNEY.—Question, Mr. Cochrane (Ayrshire, N.); Answer, Mr. Sinclair 1417

TRANSFER TO CROWN OF EAST INDIA COMPANY—PROMOTION OF COMPANY'S MILITARY OFFICERS.—Question, Sir W. J. Collins (St. Pancras, W.); Answer, Mr. Morley 1417

POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS AT MONKNEWTOWN—COUNTY MEATH.—Question, Mr. Patrick White (Meath, S.); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1418

ACCOUNTS OF THE CHANCERY SUITORS' FUND.—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick); Answer, Mr. Runciman 1418

INSPECTOR OF WATERGUARD CUSTOMS SERVICE.—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Mr. Runciman 1418

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SECRETARY TO BOARD OF CUSTOMS—RETENTION BEYOND SIXTY-FIVE YEARS OF AGE.—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Mr. Runciman 1419

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POOR RELIEF EXPENDITURE.—Question, Mr. Summerbell (Sunderland); Answer, Mr. John Burns 1421

BELFAST WAX CANDLES—ALLEGED INFRINGEMENT OF TRADE MARK.—Question, Mr. J. Devlin (Belfast, W.); Answer, Mr. Kearley 1422

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TREATMENT OF CONSUMPTIVE PATIENTS AT THE FORSTER GREEN HOSPITAL, BELFAST.—Question, Mr. J. Devlin; Answer, Mr. Birrell.. 1423

SAFETY OF LONGMOOR RANGE, HAMPSHIRE.—Question, Mr. Herbert (Buckinghamshire, Wycombe); Answer, Mr. Haldane 1424

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES.—Question, Sir Walter Foster (Deryshire, Ilkeston); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1424

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NUCLEUS CREWS.—Question, Mr. Hunt, Sir Gilbert Parker, Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.); Answers, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1425

STRENGTH OF SEA-GOING SQUADRONS.—Question, Mr. Hunt; Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1426

THE CHANNEL FLEET.—Question, Mr. Hunt; Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1426

NAVAL ARMAMENTS.—Question. Mr. Bellairs (Lynn Regis); Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1426

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THE IMPRISONED INDIAN AGITATORS.—Questions, Mr. William Redmond -(Clare, E.), Mr. Mackarness (Berkshire, Newsbury); Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Mr. Morley, Montrose Burghs) 1429

INDIAN GOLD STANDARD RESERVE.—Question, Sir Edward Sassoon (Hythe); Answer, Mr. Morley 1430

UNREST IN INDIA.—Question, Mr. Mackarness; Answer, Mr. Morley 1430

CALCUTTA POLICE AND THE PRESS.—Question, Mr. J. M. Robertson (Northumberland, Tyneside); Answer, The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir Edward Grey, Northumberland, Berwick) 1431

COLONIES AND THE SUGAR BOUNTIES.—Question, Mr. C. E. Price (Edinburgh, Central); Answer, The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Churchill, Manchester, N.W.) 1432

ORANGE RIVER FARM REVALUATION.—Question, Sir Gilbert Parker; Answer, Mr. Churchill 1433

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Lagos Mahogany Timber Concession.—Question, Mr. Alden (Middlesex, Tottenham); Answer, Mr. Churchill 1433

Chinese Conservancy Works.—Question, Mr. Mitchell Thomson; Answer, Sir Edward Grey 1434

Egyptian Government Officials' Salaries.—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answer, Sir Edward Grey 1435

Macedonian Judicial Reforms.—Question, Mr. G. Greenwood (Peterborough); Mr. Lynch (Yorkshire, W.R., Ripon); Answer, Sir Edward Grey 1435

Great Britain and Portugal—Treaties on Native Protection.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland); Answer, Sir Edward Grey 1436

Labour on the Islands of St. Thomé and Principé.—Questions, Mr. Cathcart Wason, Sir Gilbert Parker, Mr. Mitchell-Thomson; Answers, Sir Edward Grey 1436

Slavery in Portuguese African Territory.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason; Answer, Sir Edward Grey 1436

Kaid Sir Henry MacLean —Question, Mr Ashley (Lancashire, Blackpool; Answer, Sir E Grey 1437

The Denishawi Prisoners —Questions, Mr. William Redmond, Mr. J. M. Robertson, Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answers, Sir E. Grey 1437

Post Office Saving Bank Depositors.—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, E.) .. 1438

Depreciation of Post Office Saving Bank Securities.—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answer, Mr. Asquith 1439

Income-Tax on Earned Incomes.—Question, Mr. Austen Chamberlain (Worcestershire, E.); Answer, Mr. Asquith 1440

Sugar Duties.—Questions, Mr. Fell, Sir E. Sassoon; Answers, Mr. Asquith .. 1441

Depreciated Securities and the Income-Tax.—Question, Mr. Fell; Answer, Mr. Asquith 1441

Unclaimed Dividends in Bankruptcy.—Question, Mr. Parker (Halifax); Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Kearley, Devonport) .. 1441

Railway Accidents to Children.—Question, Mr. Ferens (Hull, E.); Answer, Mr. Kearley 1442

Sugar Prices.—Question, Sir Gilbert Parker; Answer, Mr. Kearley 1442

Beet and Cane Sugar Imports.—Question, Sir Gilbert Parker; Answer, Mr. Kearley 1443

Imports of Russian Sugar.—Question, Sir Gilbert Parker; Answer, Mr. Kearley 144

POST OFFICE OFFICIALS AND THE WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT.—Question, Mr. Wiles (Islington, S.); Answer, The Postmaster-General (Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar).. 1443

AUSTRALIAN MAIL SERVICE.—Question, Mr. William Redmond; Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1444

TALLINGTON SCHOOL, APPOINTMENT OF MANAGERS.—Question, Mr. Dunn (Cornwall, Camborne); Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Education (Mr. Lough, Islington, W.) 1445

THE PUBLIC TRUSTEE.—Question, Mr. Bottomley (Hackney, S.); Answer, The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Runciman, Dewsbury) .. 1445

GLASGOW GAOLS.—Question, Mr. Watt (Glasgow, College); Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Sinclair, Forfarshire) 1445

INDIAN BUDGET.—Questions, Mr. Gretton (Rutland), Sir Edward Sassoon; Answers, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling Burghs) 1445

NEW MEMBER SWORN.—Peter Francis Curran, esquire, for theCounty of Durham (Jarrow Division) 1446

NEW BILLS.

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors (Contracts) Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to Contracts for the Sale and Purchase of Intoxicating Liquors and to provide for the abolition of tied houres," presented by Mr. Richardson; supported by Mr. Thomas Frederick Richards, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Bell, Mr. Walters, Mr. John Ward, and Mr. Wedgwood Benn; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 23rd July, and to be printed. [Bill 271.] 1446

University of Dublin Bill.—"To make further provision with respect to the University of Durham," presented by Mr. Hills; supported by Sir William Anson, Sir David Brynmor Jones, and Mr. Hudson; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 272.] 1446

UNEMPLOYED WORKMEN.

Mr. J. Ramsay Macdonald (Leicester) 1446

Motion made, and Question, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to provide work through public authorities for unemployed persons," put, and agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Enoch Edwards, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. Steadman, Mr. Barnes, Mr. Brace, Mr. Nicholls, Mr. Greoge Roberts, Mr. Snowden, Mr. Thorne, and Mr. John Ward.

Unemployed Workmen Bill.—"To provide work through public authorities for unemployed persons," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 273.] 1447

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Finance Bill.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. Emmott (Oldham) in the Chair.]

Clause 19 agreed to.

Clause 20 :—

Mr. Harold Cox (Preston) 1449

Amendment proposed—

"In page 9, line 15, to leave out from the word 'sum,' to the end of sub-section, and insert the words, 'of one hundred pounds.'"—(*Mr. Harold Cox.*)

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, E.) 1449

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause 20 agreed to.

Clause 21 :—

Mr. Chiozza Money (Paddington, N.) 1450

Amendment proposed—

"In page 9, line 24, to leave out Subsection (1), and insert: '(1) Every person upon whom notice is served in manner prescribed by Section 48 of the Income-Tax Act, 1842 (which section relates to the delivery of notices by assessors), requiring him to make a return of his income chargeable to duty under any and every schedule of the income-tax, shall make a return in the form required by the notice, which shall show the amount of his aggregate income from all sources, whether he is or is not chargeable with duty, and upon what part or parts of such aggregate income, if any, income-tax has already been paid under the income-tax Acts by deduction at the source, and in default shall be liable to a penalty under Section 55 of the Income-tax Act, 1842. Provided that a penalty inflicted in the case of a person proceeded against for not complying with this provision, who proves that he is not chargeable to income-tax, shall not exceed £5 for any one offence.'"—(*Mr. Chiozza Money.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

The Postmaster-General (Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar) .. 1452
Mr. S. T. Evans (Glamorganshire, Mid.) 1453
Mr. Asquith 1455
Mr. Everett (Suffolk, Woodbridge) 1456

Amendment negatived.

Question proposed, "That Clause 21 stand part of the Bill."

Sir F. Banbury (City of London) 1457

Clause 21 agreed to.

Clause 22 :—

Amendment proposed—

"In page 10, line 15, to leave out the words, 'by surveyors.'"—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. Asquith 1457

Amendment proposed—

"In page 10, line 25, at the end, to add the words '(3) Nothing in this section shall affect proceedings for the recovery of fines or penalties incurred before the commencement of this Act, or extend the time during which any assessment may be made or amended, or a charge may be made on any person in respect of income-tax charged under any Act passed before the commencement of this Act.'"—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. Morton (Sutherland) 1457

Question put, and agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 23 :—

Mr. Courthope (Sussex, Rye) 1458

Amendment proposed—

"In page 10, line 26, to leave out Subsection (1)."—(*Mr. Courthope.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

Mr. Sydney Buxton 1459
Mr. Austen Chamberlain (Worcestershire, E.) 1462
Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) 1463
Sir F. Banbury 1464
Mr. Asquith 1464
Mr. Samuel Roberts (Sheffield, Ecclesall) 1466
Mr. Morton 1467
Mr. Fell (Great Yarmouth) 1467

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Sir F. Banbury 1467

Amendment proposed—

> "In page 10, line 36, to leave out the word 'at,' and insert the words 'within twelve months of.'"—(*Sir F. Banbury.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'at' stand part of the clause."

Mr. Asquith 1468

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause 23 agreed to.

Clause 24 agreed to.

Clause 25 :—

Mr. Austen Taylor (*Liverpool, East Toxteth*) 1468

Amendment proposed—

> "In page 11, line 29, after the word 'deductions,' to insert the words 'to the person by whom the concern is carried on.'"—(*Mr. Austin Taylor.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. Asquith 1469

Question put, and agreed to.

Amendment proposed—

> "In page 11, line 30, after the word 'cost' to insert the words 'to that person.'"—(*Mr. Austin Taylor.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and agreed to.

Mr. Austin Taylor 1469

Amendment proposed—

> "In page 11, line 30, after the word 'plant,' to insert the words 'included in that capital cost any expenditure in machinery or plant by way of renewal, improvement, or renistatement.'"—(*Mr. Austin Taylor.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 26 agreed to.

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Clause 27 :—

Sir F. Banbury 1470

Amendment proposed—

"In page 12, line 18, to leave out the words 'during the current financial year."—(*Sir F. Banbury.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

Mr. Asquith 1471
Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1471

Amendment negatived.

Mr. Harold Cox (Preston) 1472
Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1474
Mr. Asquith 1474
Mr. A. J. Balfour (City of London) 1475
Mr. Asquith 1475
Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1475

Clause 28, agreed to.

Mr. Harold Cox 1476

New clause—

"As from the first day of October, 1907, the duties imposed by Section 2 of the Finance Act, 1901, and by the first Schedule to that Act, shall each be reduced one-half."—(*Mr. Harold Cox.*)

Brought up, and read a first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the clause be read a second time."

Mr. Asquith 1481
Mr. F. E. Smith (Liverpool, Walton) 1485
Mr. Cowan (Surrey, Guildford) 1488
Mr. Gwynn (Galway) 1490
Mr. Snowden (Blackburn) 1491
Mr. Stuart Wortley (Sheffield, Hallam) 1495
Mr. Evans (Glamorganshire, Mid.) 1496
Mr. Stanley Wilson (Yorkshire E.R., Holderness) 1498
Mr. Masterman (West Ham, N.) 1499
Mr. Theodore Taylor (Lancashire, Radcliffe) 1502
Mr. Scott (Ashton-under-Lyne) 1504
Mr. Hunt (Shropshire, Ludlow) 1506
Mr. Charles Roberts (Lincoln) 1508
Mr. Richardson (Nottingham, S.) 1509
Mr. Hemmerde (Denbighshire, E.) 1512
Mr. R. Duncan (Lanarkshire, Govan) 1515
Mr. Maddison (Burnley) 1516

Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs) 1518
Mr. T. L. Corbett (Down, N.) 1520
Mr. C. Duncan (Barrow-in-Furness) 1521
Mr. J. M. Robertson (Northumberland, Tyneside) 1521
Mr. Chiozza Money (Paddington, N.) 1523
Mr. W. E. Harvey (Derbyshire, N.E.) 1525
Mr. Markham (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield) 1527
Sir Christopher Furness (Hartlepool) 1528
Mr. Harwood (Bolton) 1530

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 175 ; Noes, 312. (Division List No. 272.)

Mr. Hicks Beach (Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury) 1535

Death of Sir A. Billson.

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1536

Motion made and Question, " That the Chairman do report Progress ; and ask leave to sit again,—"(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman*)—put, and agreed to.

Committee report Progress ; to sit again to-morrow.

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question, " That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Whiteley*)—put, and agreed to.

Adjourned at fourteen minutes before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS : WEDNESDAY, 10TH JULY, 1907.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Kingston-upon-Hull Corporation Bill.—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 1537

King Edward's Hospital Fund for London Bill [H.L.] ; Heywood and Middleton Water Board Bill [H.L.].—Commons' Amendments considered and agreed to 1537

Central London Railway Bill.—Moved, That the order made on the 20th day of March last, " That no Private Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after the 18th day of June next," be dispensed with, and that the Bill be now read 2^a ; agreed to : Bill read 2^a accordingly, and committed 1537

Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Bill [H.L.]. —Amendments reported (according to order), and Bill to be read 3^a To-morrow 1537

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill. [No. 106]; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 12) Bill. [No. 107]; Local Government Provisional Order (No. 15) Bill [No. 108]—Brought from the Commons. Read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners 1537

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill [H.L.]; Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill [H.L.].—House in Committee (according to Order). The Amendments proposed by the Committee made; Standing Committee negatived. The Report of Amendments to be received To-morrow 1537

Portobello and Musselburgh Tramways (Levenhall Extension) Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.]—Read 3ª (according to Order), and passed, and sent to the Commons 1537

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

COLONIES: ANNUAL.—No. 527 Ceylon 1537

LOCAL AUTHORITIES.—Report of the Departmental Committee appointed to inquire into the accounts of local authorities.

Vol. I.—Report.

Vol. II.—Minutes of Evidence; with digest of evidence and index to evidence 1537

TREATY SERIES.

No. 16. (1907.) Convention between the United Kingdom and Belgium supplementing Article XIV. of the Treaty of Extradition of 29th October, 1901; signed at London, 5th March, 1907. (Ratifications exchanged at London, 17th April, 1907.)

No. 17. (1907.) Agreement between the United Kingdom and the Republic of Costa Rica for the exchange of postal money orders; signed at San José de Costa Rica, 26th April, 1907 1538

TRADE REPORTS—MISCELLANEOUS SERIES.

No. 662. (Imports into Mexico from the United Kingdom and Germany) 1538

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.—Orders made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and confirmed by the Board of Trade—

I.—Amending the East Sussex Light Railway Orders, 1901 and 1905.

II.—Reviving the powers granted and extending the periods limited by the Central Essex Light Railway Orders, 1901 to 1905, for the compulsory purchase of lands and extending the periods limited by those orders for the completion of the railways and works thereby authorised.

Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the Wolverhampton and

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Cannock Chase Railway Company to construct and work their authorised railways as a light railway under the Light Railways Act, 1896, and for other purposes.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 1538

SUPERANNUATION.—Treasury Minute, dated 5th July, 1907, declaring that for the due and efficient discharge of the duties of the office of Director of the National Galleries of Scotland professional or other peculiar qualifications not ordinarily to be acquired on the public service are required : Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 1538

BOARD OF EDUCATION (ROYSTON NON-PROVIDED SCHOOL).—Return of official correspondence relating to the appeal of the managers of the Royston Church of England School against the refusal of the local education authority to consent to the appointment of Mr. O. B. Milnes as head teacher of the school : Laid before the House (pursuant to order of the 27th of June last), and to be printed. (No. 103) 1539

PALACE OF WESTMINSTER.—Report from the Select Committee (with the proceedings of the Committee) made, and to be printed. (No. 104.) Minutes of evidence, together with an appendix, laid upon the Table, and to be delivered out 1539

THE MERCHANT SERVICE.

Lord Muskerry 1539
The Earl of Granard 1546
Lord Ellenborough 1546
The Marquess of Lansdowne 1546

IRISH EVICTED TENANTS.

The Earl of Donoughmore 1547

Moved, "That there be laid before the House a Return giving the names of the evicted tenants in Ireland whom His Majesty's Government intend to restore, the date of their eviction, a statement as to whether they were or were not Plan of Campaign tenants, whether they were judicial tenants or not, the amount of rent in arrear when they were evicted, the name of the landlord, and the townland, parish, barony, and county in which their holdings were situated."—(*The Earl of Donoughmore.*)

Lord Denman 1553
Lord Ashbourne 1556
The Earl of Dunraven 1560
The Earl of Mayo 1561
The Lord President of the Council (*The Earl of Crewe*) 1563
The Marquess of Lansdowne 1566
The Earl of Donoughmore 1571

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

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Limited Partnerships Bill.

House in Committee (according to Order.)

[The Earl of Onslow in the Chair.]

Clauses 1 to 3 agreed to.

Clause 4 :—

The Earl of Granard 1571

Amendment moved—

"In page 1, line 22, after the word 'partnership,' to insert the words 'shall not consist, in the case of a partnership carrying on the business of banking, of more than ten persons, and, in the case of any other partnership, of more than twenty persons.' "—(*The Earl of Granard.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Drafting Amendment agreed to.

Lord Avebury 1572

Amendment moved—

"In page 1, lines 24 and 25, to leave out the words 'incurred in the usual course of the partnership business by or on behalf.' "—(*Lord Avebury.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Lord Avebury 1572

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 1, to leave out the words 'or undertake to contribute.' "—(*Lord Avebury.*)

The Earl of Granard 1572

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

The Earl of Granard 1572

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 6, after the word 'partnership,' to insert the words 'either directly or indirectly.' "—(*The Earl of Granard.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 13, after the word 'name,' to insert as a new subsection: '(5) A body corporate may be a limited partner.'"—(*The Earl of Granard.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 4, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 5 agreed to.

Clause 6:—

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 21, after the word 'thereon,' to insert the words 'and he may alsorequire that the said books shall be audited by a person who publicly carries on business as an accountant.'"—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

The Earl of Granard 1573
Lord Joicey 1574
The Lord Chancellor (*Lord Loreburn*) 1574

Amendment moved—

"To leave out Clause 6, and to insert the following new clause:— 6.—(1) A limited partner shall not take part in the management of the partnership business, and shall not have power to bind the firm; provided that a limited partner may by himself or his agent at any time inspect the books of the firm and examine into the state and prospects of the partnership business, and may advise with the partners thereon. If a limited partner takes part in the management of the partnership business he shall be liable for all debts and obligations of the firm incurred while he so takes part in the management as though he were a general partner. (2) A limited partner shall not be entitled to dissolve the partnership by notice. (3) A limited partnership shall not be dissolved by the death or bankruptcy of a limited partner, and the lunacy of a limited partner shall not be a ground for dissolution of the partnership by the Court unless the lunatic's share cannot be otherwise ascertained and realised. (4) In the event of the dissolution of a limited partnership its affairs shall be wound up by the general partners unless the Court otherwise orders. (5) Subject to any agreement expressed or implied between the partners—(*a*) Any difference arising as to ordinary matters connected with the partnership business may be decided by a majority of the general partners. (*b*) A limited partner may, with the consent of the general partners, assign his share in the partnership, and upon such an assignment the assignee shall become a limited partner with all the rights of the assignor. (*c*) The other partners shall not be entitled to dissolve the partnership by reason of any limited partner suffering his share to be charged for his separate debt. (*d*) A person may be introduced as a partner without the consent of the existing limited partners. (*e*) Applications to the Court to wind up a limited partnership shall be by petition under the Companies Acts, 1862 to 1900."—(*The Earl of Granard.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 7 agreed to.

Clause 8 :—

Drafting and verbal Amendments agreed to.

Clause 8, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 9 :—

Drafting Amendments agreed to.

Clause 9, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 10 :—

Drafting Amendments agreed to.

Clause 10, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 11 :—

Verbal Amendment agreed to.

Clause 11, as amended, agreed to.

Remaining clauses agreed to.

Standing Committee negatived. The Report of Amendments to be received on Tuesday next ; and Bill to be printed as amended. [No. 105.]

ALL SAINTS' SCHOOL, HALIFAX.

Lord Barnard 1575

Moved, That there be laid before the House papers relating to the Salterhebble, Halifax, All Saints School.—(*Lord Barnard.*)

The Earl of Crewe 1580
The Marquess of Salisbury 1584
Lord Barnard 1586

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

House adjourned at a quarter before Eight o'clock, till To-morrow, half past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS : WEDNESDAY, 10TH JULY, 1907.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Alton Military Hospital Bill [LORDS].—Read a second time and committed 1587

Aberdeen Corporation Electricity Bill [Lords].—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1587

Message from the Lords.—That they have agreed to: Ladybank Sewerage Drainage and Water Provisional Order Bill; Clyde Navigation Order Confirmation Bill, without Amendment; Leeds Corporation Bill, with Amendments.

Amendments to:—Southport Birkdale and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [Lords].—without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill intituled, "An Act to confirm a Provisional Order under the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Portobello and Musselburgh Tramways (Levenhall Extension)." [Portobello and Musselburgh Tramways (Levenhall Extension) Order Confirmation Bill [Lords.]

Killery's Divorce Bill [Lords].—That they communicate Minutes of Evidence and Proceedings taken upon the Second Reading of Killery's Divorce Bill [Lords], as desired by this House, with a request that the same may be returned 1587

Portobello and Musselburgh Tramways (Levenhall Extension) Order Confirmation Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; and ordered, under Section 9 of The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, to be read a second time To-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 274.] 1587

PETITIONS.

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill.—Petition from West Ilsley, against; to lie upon the Table 1588

Pauper Lunatics (Cost of Maintenance).—Petition from Leeds, for legislation; to lie upon the Table 1588

Small Landholders (Scotland) Bill.—Petition from Stirling, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1588

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the Wolverhampton and Cannock Chase Railway Company to construct and work their authorised Railways as a Light Railway under The Light Railways Act, 1896, and for other purposes (Wolverhampton and Cannock Chase Railway (Light Railway) Order 1907) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1588

Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and confirmed by the Board of Trade, reviving the powers granted and extending the periods limited by the Central Essex Light Railway Orders, 1901 to 1905, for the compulsory purchase of lands and extending the periods limited by those Orders for the completion of the railways and works thereby authorised (Central Essex Light Railway (Extension of Time) Order, 1907) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1588

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LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and confirmed by the Board of Trade, amending the East Sussex Light Railway Orders, 1901 and 1905 (East Sussex Light Railway (Extension of Time and Amendment) Order, 1907) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1589

LOCAL AUTHORITIES' ACCOUNTS (DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE).—Copy presented, of Report of Departmental Committee appointed to inquire into the Accounts of Local Authorities. Vol. I. Report. Vol. II. Minutes of Evidence, with Digest and Index [by Command]; to lie upon the Table .. 1589

SUPERANNUATIONS.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 5th July, 1907, declaring that for the due and efficient discharge of the duties of the office of Director of the National Galleries of Scotland, professional or other peculiar qualifications not ordinarily to be acquired on the Public Service are required [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1589

TREATY SERIES (No. 16, 1907).—Copy presented, of Convention between the United Kingdom and Belgium, supplementing Article XIV. of the Treaty of Extradition of 29th October, 1901. Signed at London, 5th March, 1907 Ratifications exchanged at London, 17th April, 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1589

TREATY SERIES (No. 17, 1907).—Copy presented, of Agreement between the United Kingdom and the Republic of Costa Rica for the Exchange of Postal Money Orders. Signed at San José de Costa Rica, 26th April, 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1589

TRADE REPORTS (MISCELLANEOUS SERIES).—Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Report, Miscellaneous Series, No. 662 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1589

COLONIAL REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copy presented, of Colonial Report, No. 527 (Ceylon, Annual, Report for 1906) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1590

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.—Royal University of Ireland. Copy of Account of Receipts and expenditure of the Royal University of Ireland for the year ended 31st March, 1907, together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 247.] 1590

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

ANNUAL INCOME OF PUBLIC CHARITIES EXEMPTED FROM INCOME-TAX.—Question, Mr. R. Pearce (Staffordshire, Leek); Answer, Mr. Asquith 1590

IMPORTS OF COCOA.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland); Answer, Mr. Asquith 1590

ALLOCATION OF FINES IN CASES UNDER THE IRISH EDUCATION ACT, 1892.—Question, Colonel McCalmont (Antrim, E.); Answer, Mr. Birrell 1591

RATE COLLECTOR'S OFFICE ON LICENSED PREMISES.—Question, Colonel McCalmont; Answer, Mr. Birrell 1592

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EVICTED TENANTS, CASE OF JOHN NORMOYLE.—Question, Mr. O'Shaughnessy (Limerick, W.); Answer, Mr. Birrell 1593

EVICTED TENANTS, CASE OF MRS. LENA O'CARROLL OF TRALEE.—Question, Mr. O'Shaughnessy; Answer, Mr. Birrell 1593

BRITISH INDIANS IN RHODESIA.—Question, Sir William Bull (Hammersmith); Answer, Mr. Churchill 1593

BARRISTERS PRACTISING IN EGYPTIAN COURT—sCOUNCIL OF DISCIPLINE.—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.); Answer, Sir Edward Grey .. 1594

EGYPTIAN LEGAL PRACTICE—GRATUITOUS DEFENCE OF PRISONERS.—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answer, Sir E. Grey 1594

ARRESTS OF BRITISH INDIANS AT DELAGOA BAY.—Question, Sir William Bull; Answer, Sir Edward Grey 1594

POSTMASTERSHIP OF LIMERICK.—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick); Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1595

THE POSTMASTERSHIP OF CASTLEREA.—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1595

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK—TRANSFER OF IRISH BUSINESS TO DUBLIN.—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Mr. Sydney Buxton 1596

KINGSWOOD AND LONGTON CHARITIES BILLS.—Question, Mr. Evelyn Cecil (Aston Manor); Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1597

INCOME-TAX EXEMPTIONS.—Question, Mr. Austen Chamberlain (Worcestershire, E.); Answer, Mr. Asquith 1597

CHANNEL FLEET — REFIT.—Question, Mr. Mitchell-Thomson (Lanarkshire, N.W.); Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee) 1598

SHEERNESS BAR.—Question, Mr. Mitchell-Thomson; Answer, Mr. Edmund Robertson 1598

SOLDIERS' UNIFORMS.—Question, Mr. Rendall (Gloucestershire, Thornbury); Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Haldane, Haddington) 1599

AUSTRALIAN MEAT FOR THE ARMY.—Question, Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.) Answer, Mr. Haldane 1599

MILITARY MANŒUVRES IN SCOTLAND.—Questions, Mr. Dewar (Edinburgh, S.), Mr. McCrae (Edinburgh, E.), Mr. Younger (Ayr Burghs); Answers, Mr. Haldane 1599

SIMLA MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE.—Question, Mr. Laidlaw (Renfrewshire, E.); Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Mr. Morley, Montrose Burghs) .. 1600

PORT STANLEY.—Question, Mr. Mitchell-Thomson; Answer, The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Churchill, Manchester, N.W.) 1601

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REPATRIATION OF CHINESE FROM THE TRANSVAAL.—Question, Sir Gilbert Parker (Gravesend); Answer, Mr. Churchill 1602

MR. DEAKIN'S COLONIAL PREFERENCE SCHEME.—Questions, Mr. Harold Cox (Preston), Mr. William Redmond, Sir Gilbert Parker; Answers, Mr. Churchill 1602

COOLIE LABOUR ON THE PANAMA CANAL.—Question, Mr. Stanley Wilson (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness); Answer, Mr. Churchill 1603

HAGUE CONFERENCE AND NAVAL PRIZES.—Question, Mr. Gretton (Rutland); Answer, The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Runciman, Dewsbury, for Sir Edward Grey) 1603

FINGER IMPRESSION IDENTIFICATION.—Question, Sir William Bull (Hammersmith); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.) 1633

MR. A. A. LYNCH.—Questions, Lord R. Cecil (Marylebone, E.), Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.); Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1604

INFLAMMABLE SUBSTANCES.—Question, Mr. Morton (Sutherland), Mr. H. J. Tennant (Berwickshire); Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1604

CARE OF THE FEEBLE-MINDED.—Question, Mr. T. F. Richards (Wolverhampton, W.); Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1604

CRIANLARICH RAILWAY STATION.—Question, Sir John Dewar (Inverness); Answer, Mr. Runciman (for Mr. Lloyd-George) 1605

THE CONSULAR SERVICE.—Question, Mr. Harold Cox; Answer, Mr. Runciman 1606

HORSE FLESH FOR HUMAN FOOD.—Question, Mr. Rendall; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. John Burns, Battersea) 1606

TUBERCULOUS PIGS.—Questions, Mr. Silcock (Somersetshire, Wells), Mr. Field; Answers, Mr. John Burns 1606

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ACCOMMODATION.—Questions, Mr. Middlemore (Birmingham, N.), Lord Balcarres (Lancashire, Chorley); Answers, The President of the Board of Education (Mr. McKenna, Monmouthshire, N.) 1607

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES.—Question, Mr. Claude Hay (Shoreditch, Hoxton); Answer, Mr. Runciman 1608

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EMPLOYMENT OF WIDOWS IN GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS.—Question, Mr. Snowden (Blackburn); Answer, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Harcourt, Lancashire, Rossendale) 1608

STRANORLAR LABOURERS' COTTAGE SCHEME.—Question, Mr. C. MacVeigh (Donegal, E.); Answer, The Attorney-General for Ireland (Mr. Cherry, Liverpool, Exchange, for Mr. Birrell) 1608

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BOYTONRATH EVICTED TENANT.—Question, Mr. Lundon (Limerick, E.); Answer, Mr. Cherry 1609

ABINGTON EVICTED TENANT.—Question, Mr. Lundon; Answer, Mr. Cherry .. 1610

MOUNTSHANNON UNTENANTED LANDS.—Question, Mr. Lundon; Answer, Mr. Cherry 1610

MOUNTSHANNON FIRING PROSECUTION.—Question, Mr. Lonsdale (Armagh, Mid.); Answer, Mr. Cherry 1611

BOYCOTTING PROCECUTION AT LEITRIM ASSIZES.—Questions, Mr. Lonsdale, Mr. T. L. Corbett (Down, N.); Answers, Mr. Cherry 1611

THE BRADY BOYCOTTING CASE.—Questions, Mr. Lonsdale, Mr. Moore (Armagh N.), Mr. P. A. McHugh (Sligo, N.), Mr. John Redmond (Waterford); Answers, Mr. Cherry, Mr. Speaker 1612

TANDRAGEE EVICTED TENANT.—Question, Mr. Lonsdale; Answer, Mr. Cherry .. 1614

HOLLYPARK FARM DISPUTE.—Question, Mr. Lonsdale; Answer, Mr. Cherry .. 1615

ESTATES COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.—Question, Mr. Ginnell (Westmeath, N.); Answer, Mr. Cherry 1615

IRISH DEPARTMENTS RETURNS.—Questions, Mr. Ginnell, Mr. Flynn (Cork, N.); Answers, Mr. Cherry 1615

IRISH EDUCATION RULES, KILMEEDY SCHOOL.—Question, Mr. O'Shaughnessy (Limerick, W.); Answer, Mr. Cherry 1616

INSANITARY DWELLINGS IN IRISH TOWNS.—Question, Mr. O'Shaughnessy; Answer, Mr. Cherry 1616

CRIME IN LIMERICK.—Questions, Mr. O'Shaughnessy, Mr. Moore; Answers, Mr. Cherry 1617

KNOCKLONG DEMONSTRATION.—Questions, Mr. Sheehan (Cork County, Mid.), Mr. James Campbell (Dublin University), Mr. T. L. Corbett (Down, N.); Answers, Mr. Cherry 1618

IRISH DAIRY INSPECTORSHIP.—Questions, Mr. Flynn (Cork County, N.), Mr. T. L. Corbett; Answers, The Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture for Ireland (Mr. T. W. Russell, Tyrone, S.) 1618

ASKING QUESTIONS ON BEHALF OF ABSENT MEMBERS.—Questions, Mr. Gretton, Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answers, Mr. Cherry, Mr. Speaker 1619

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Question, Mr. Morton; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Sinclair, Forfarshire) 1620

SCOTTISH SCHOOL GRANTS.—Question, Mr. Gulland (Dumfries, Burghs); Answer, Mr. Sinclair 1620

SCOTTISH HERRING FISHERY.—Questions, Mr. Cathcart Wason, Major Anstruther-Gray (St. Andrews Burghs), Mr. Morton; Answers, Mr. Sinclair 1620

General Owen's Committee.—Question, Viscount Castlereagh (Maidstone); Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) 1621

Business of the House.—Question, Mr. A. J. Balfour (City of London); Answer, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1622

Business of the House—(Land Values (Scotland) Bill).—Motion made, and Question put, "That the proceedings on the Second Reading of the Land Values (Scotland) Bill, if under discussion at Eleven o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order (Sittings of the House)."—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman*).

The House divided:—Ayes, 252; Noes, 58. (Division List No. 273.) .. 1622

Land Values (Scotland) Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Remnant (Finsbury, Holborn) 1625
Mr. Younger (Ayr Burghs) 1633

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day three months.'"—(*Mr. Remnant.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

The Solicitor-General for Scotland (Mr. Ure, Linlithgowshire) 1641
Mr. A. J. Balfour (City of London) 1652
Mr. A. Dewar (Edinburgh, S.) 1663
Mr. J. M. Henderson (Aberdeenshire, W.) 1666
Mr. Wood (Glasgow, St. Rollox) 1673
Mr. Munro Ferguson (Leith, Burghs) 1677
Mr. Barrie (Londonderry, N.) 1679
Mr. C. E. Price (Edinburgh, Central) 1686
Mr. Hart-Davies (Hackney, N.) 1688
Mr. Richardson (Nottingham. S.) 1688
Mr. McCrae (Edinburgh, E.) 1689
Mr. R. Duncan (Lanarkshire, Govan) 1693
Mr. Gulland (Dumfries Burghs) 1695
Mr. Mitchell-Thomson (Lanarkshire, N.W.) 1697
Mr. Barnes (Glasgow, Blackfriars) 1705
Mr. Cochrane (Ayrshire, N.) 1707
The Lord-Advocate (Mr. Thomas Shaw, Hawick Burghs) 1711

Question put.

The House divided; Ayes, 294; Noes, 76. (Division List No. 274.)

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and comimtted to a Standing Committee.

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EVICTED TENANTS (IRELAND) [EXPENSES].—Committee to consider of authorising the payment, out of moneys provided by Parliament, of compensation and expenses incurred under any Act of the present session to facilitate the provision of land for certain evicted tenants in Ireland, and for other purposes connected therewith, and of authorising the National Debt Commissioners to make advances for the purposes of such Act (King's Recommendation signified), To-morrow.—(*Mr. Whiteley*) 1723

And, it being half-past Eleven of the clock, Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Adjourned twelve minutes before Twelve o'clock.

END OF TABLE OF CONTENTS TO VOL. CLXXVII.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(*AUTHORISED EDITION*)
IN THE
SECOND SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT* OF THE UNITED
KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*, APPOINTED TO MEET
THE TWELFTH DAY OF FEBRUARY IN THE SEVENTH YEAR OF THE
REIGN OF
HIS MAJESTY KING EDWARD VII.

NINTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1907.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 27th June, 1907.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Central London Railway Bill.—Brought from the Commons; read 1^{a}; and referred to the Examiners.

Birmingham Corporation Water Bill [H.L.].—Returned from the Commons agreed to.

Great Yarmouth Port and Haven Bill; Taff Vale Railway Bill.—Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to.

Annfield Plain and District Gas Bill; City of London (Union of Parishes) Bill [H.L.]; Kingston-upon-Hull Corporation Bill.—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Kenmare (*E. Kenmare*), be proposed to the House as a Member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Earl of Morley, read, agreed to.

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London, No. 1) Bill [H.L.]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]; Land Drainage Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill; Land Drainage Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill.—Amendments reported (according to order); and Bills to be read 3^{a} on Monday next.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill [H.L.]; Killery's Divorce Bill [H.L.]; Read 3^{a} (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill [H.L.].—Committed: The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Portishead District Water Bill [H.L.].—Reported, with Amendments.

London and North-Western Railway Bill.—Standing Order No. 93 considered (according to order), and dispensed with, with respect to a petition of the Hon. Cecil Saumarez Irby. Leave given to present the said Petition.

Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Five Lords appointed a Select Committee on the London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill and other Bills do form the Select Committee for the consideration of the Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No.2) Bill [H.L.]; read, and agreed to; all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bill to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bill.

BRIGHOUSE CORPORATION BILL.

Bill read 3^a (according to order).

*LORD AVEBURY: My Lords, I wish to move an Amendment the object of which is to introduce certain safeguards and to protect private enterprise in the matter of electric supply. It may seem rather late in the day to propose Amendments after the Third Reading, but I know that my noble friend the Chairman of Committees always deprecates instructions on going into Committee, therefore it is practically the only opportunity a private Peer has of moving any Amendments upon such a Bill. No doubt the powers asked for in the Bill have been granted in other cases, but the results have been anything but satisfactory. In the case of Woolwich, where they were first granted, the corporation have lost several thousands of pounds, and they have now determined to abandon the business; in the case of Marylebone I am informed that the loss has been over £5,000; and there have been losses in other cases also. Partly no doubt upon these considerations, but partly also from the fact that many have thought these powers undesirable, the provisions which I venture to ask your Lordships to insert were, after consideration, put into the Bermondsey Bill, and have now the effect of law. Last year, after some debate, corresponding words, and in some cases, actually the same words, were introduced into the London County Council (General Powers) Bill. This session, I understand, the Board of Trade have struck the clauses out of another local Bill which asked for the same powers as are in this Bill, and words were inserted similar to those I am now asking the House to adopt. Lastly, in the Aberdeen Bill these exact words have been inserted. So that the principle of the words I am suggesting has been adopted after consideration in several other cases, and I think it would be desirable to introduce them in this Bill, not only on general principles, but because of the desirability of adopting a consistent course in all cases. I cannot see why powers which have been refused to Aberdeen and even to the London County Council should be given in this case. I submit, therefore, that both on the merits of the clauses themselves and also on grounds of consistency these clauses should be introduced in this particular Bill, and I beg to move the first Amendment standing in my name.

Amendment moved—

"In page 6, line 28, after the word 'removed' to insert the words 'Provided as follows:—(*a*) It shall not be lawful for the corporation to expend money (except through a contractor) upon the provision of the labour and materials required for the wiring for and fixing of electric light fittings upon the premises of their consumers or prospective consumers, or upon the provision of lamps, fuzes, switches, fittings, lampholders, and other apparatus and things for lighting purposes; but nothing in this subsection shall prevent the corporation completing the service line between their supply mains and their own apparatus upon the premises of any such consumer. (*b*) The corporation shall so adjust the rents and charges to be made by them for electric light fittings and for the wiring in connection therewith as to meet any expenditure by them under the powers of this section in connection therewith (including interest upon any moneys borrowed for those purposes and all sums applied either by way of instalments or by way of payments to sinking fund for repayment of moneys so borrowed).'"—(*Lord Avebury.*)

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (The Earl of ONSLOW): My Lords, I am not at this moment going to make any comment upon the principle of the Amendments which the noble Lord desires to propose, though I shall perhaps say a word on that point before I sit down. I wish to address myself for the moment to the question of whether this is the proper stage at which these Amendments should be introduced. Your Lordships are aware that there are many stages of a Bill when Amendments may be introduced. This is the last stage of this Bill in this House. It has already passed the House of Commons, come up to your Lordships' House, and now been read a third time. I would submit to the noble Lord that those on whose behalf he is moving these Amendments have had opportunities of inserting them both in the House of Commons and in this House. There is another method I would have suggested to them if I had known they were desirous of taking this course, namely, that they should have sent their Amendments to me, as has been done in similar circumstances by other corporations. I would then have considered them, and possibly I might have induced the promoters to insert them. I venture to say that the Third Reading of a Bill is a very dangerous stage at which to put in Amendments of this kind which are not agreed. A case arose in December last year on the Edinburgh Suburban Tramways Bill, and several noble Lords expressed the opinion that the Third Reading of a Bill was not a proper time to insert Amendments. But there was a vast difference between that case and this. In the Edinburgh case the Amendments were agreed by both parties; therefore I did not take objection to their being inserted. Moreover, the parties had not had those opportunities which were open to the friends of the noble Lord to insert them at earlier stages of the Bill. Under the circumstances I think I must ask your Lordships not to insert these Amendments, because there have been ample opportunities at earlier stages of which those interested have not availed themselves.

As to the merits of the Amendments, the noble Lord is the champion of the cause against municipal trading. I agree to a large extent with the views he entertains, and I think the time has arrived when what we know in the Private Bill Department as "Model Clauses" should be considered in connection with this subject. I propose between this and next session to consider whether some model clauses ought not to be prepared. They would not necessarily be embodied in every Bill, but, at any rate, they would be available and might be adopted by promoters or imposed upon them by your Lordships' House. Under the circumstances I ask your Lordships not to agree to the insertion of the Amendments proposed.

*THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Earl of CREWE): I do not propose to say a single word on the merits of the Amendments proposed by the noble Lord opposite; I shall confine myself entirely to the question raised by the noble Earl in the earlier part of his remarks as to the occasion on which these Amendments are proposed. The noble Earl alluded to what happened last December in the case of the Edinburgh Electric Tramways Bill, which, as he very truly said, was a much stronger case than the one before us to-day. In that case the Amendments were agreed, and it was also the fact that those who desired to insert them had not had earlier opportunities of doing so. As I understand, in this case there is no reason why the Amendments should not have been moved at an earlier stage. In the Edinburgh case the noble Earl objected, but did not press his objection on the ground that the Amendments were agreed. Lord Balfour of Burleigh, also a great authority on the procedure of this House, protested against the way in which the matter was being dealt with, and the protest was supported by my noble friend Lord Ripon, who said that as the noble Earl did not press his objection he would not do so either, but he added—

> "If my noble friend had objected to these Amendments, in the circumstances I certainly should have supported his authority."

On that analogy I should certainly support the noble Earl in objecting to the insertion of these Amendments at this stage.

*LORD AVEBURY: Your Lordships know how difficult it is to follow private Bills, and my attention was not called to this Bill until last Saturday. Even had it been otherwise, I know your Lordships do not like instructions moved on the Second Reading. Therefore, as I am informed, this is the only opportunity a private Peer has of moving Amendments to a private Bill. I have listened with much satisfaction to one part of my noble friend's speech, because he has promised to consider, and I hope introduce, model clauses next session. That is quite satisfactory. I have no interest whatever in this particular Bill; it was on general principles I moved these Amendments, which have been introduced, as I have already stated, in several other Bills. Under the circumstances, I will not put your Lordships to the trouble of a division, but will withdraw the Amendments, having to a great extent secured the object for which I put them on the Paper.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Bill passed, and returned to the Commons.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

LUNACY.

Sixty-first Report of the Commissioners in Lunacy, 1907.

COLONIES: ANNUAL.

No. 526. St. Helena (Report for 1906).

COMPANY LAWS IN THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

Comparative analysis of the Company Laws of the United Kingdom, India, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, with a memorandum prepared for the Imperial Conference, 1907, by the direction of the Board of Trade.

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3842. Santo Domingo.
No. 3843. Japan (Yokohama).

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACTS, 1882 TO 1902 (PROCEEDINGS).

Report by the Board of Trade respecting the applications to and proceedings of the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 to 1902, during the past year. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

Lord Avebury.

BRITISH EAST AFRICA.

LORD HINDLIP rose to call attention to the state of affairs in British East Africa and to move for Papers. The noble Lord said: My Lords, before bringing the case of British East Africa to the notice of your Lordships' House, may I ask for that indulgence which your Lordships are wont to extend to those who address your Lordships' House for the first time? There is one point on which I think that we interested in British East Africa will find ourselves in complete agreement with the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies. We wish the country to pay its way and not to be dependent on a grant-in-aid. I believe, my Lords, that this desirable end can be easily obtained, and more easily than the advisers of His Majesty's Government seem to think. At present the country is not making the progress which it should make, and I am very much afraid that it is in danger of reverting to the state from which it has so lately emerged. The reasons for this are not obscure. The community is in a state of intense dissatisfaction, which has shown itself in many ways; it is a disease eating into the country and showing its presence by various symptoms.

Several petitions concerning the present situation of the Colony have been presented both locally and at home. They comprise: first, the colonists' petition to the Secretary of State; secondly, the petition to individual Members of Parliament of last year; thirdly, a petition presented to Colonel Sadler by many business men of Nairobi praying that owing to the delays in obtaining his signature to deeds and documents that when on tour he would appoint someone who could execute them for him; fourthly, a petition requesting the removal of certain persons connected with what is known in East Africa as the Wehrner Case.

This last petition was one which your Lordships will doubtless consider extraordinary and needs some explanation, but it was the result of a serious case which left feelings of doubt as to the competence of the local tribunals; and if the petition itself went too far, I venture to consider that it was perfectly legitimate to draw the attention of the Secretary of State to the matter in question.

A man named Wehrner was convicted of the murder of a native and sentenced to death. This sentence was commuted by the then Commissioner, the late Sir Donald Stewart, on representations made by the jury, to a life sentence. The local Court of Appeal upheld the conviction, but, on applying to the Privy Council for leave to appeal, the then Lord Chancellor, the noble and learned Lord Halsbury, in allowing the appeal, said it was not a case of ordering a new trial as, in their opinion, no trial had been held, and what the jury had said did not amount to a verdict of guilty. The conviction was quashed on appeal, and *The Times*, in a leading article, spoke of the original trial as having the appearance of a mockery, followed by a string of irregularities. Those strong comments caused this rather extraordinary petition to be presented to the authorities.

Now, my Lords, I will come to the question of the means available for the enforcement of law and order. At present there are two battalions of King's African Rifles, a body of native police, a few white police, and a volunteer force. To make this question as short as possible, I will simply say, my Lords, as far as the military force are concerned, that the battalion recruited in British Central Africa is, I believe, a first-rate force, but the East African Battalion is composed of men from various parts, and I think that the companies composed of local Masai and Kikuyu tribesmen might well be spared, and in this way some money saved to the Treasury, while by the exercise of a little tact the Volunteer force, now I fancy largely existing on paper, could be much increased and, if properly organised, be made a most efficient force.

The white police should be increased and the native police re-organised. The native police, my Lords, have the power of arresting a white man, and this power is strongly resented. It has, I grant, never to my knowledge been used, but—I speak under correction—in no self-governing Colony is this allowed, except possibly under most exceptional circumstances. In another place, a statement has been made that only general complaints have been received against the black police, but I surmise that these general complaints must have been more than occasional. In the local papers on 12th January this year was reported a strike of Kikuyu police in Nairobi when the troops were sent for and the strikers overawed. A more serious report appeared a fortnight later when two native police were said to be seen by two settlers robbing native women by force, and reported; the next day both these men appeared on duty and one of the Colonists who reported the case was assaulted the following night. It is this same tribe of Kikuyu who are locally said to be in a state of unrest, and I fear that, owing to letters received during the last few days, there is good reason to believe this report has some foundation.

I may add that on 2nd June the London *Standard* published a telegram that a child of six had been criminally assaulted during the absence of its mother. I believe the offender was arrested, but I do not know whether the noble Earl the Secretary of State has any information yet as to how this miscreant was dealt with. I can assure your Lordships that the inhabitants of the country, whether white or black, will have no guarantee of the proper enforcement of order until we have a sufficient force of mounted white police.

I come now, my Lords, to the Report of the Land Commission appointed late in 1904 by Sir Donald Stewart. This Report was presented in May, 1905, and was signed by a Member of your Lordships' House, Lord Delamere, two of His Majesty's Judges, and a prominent settler in the country. Eighteen sittings were held, and forty-four persons of all classes examined. I regret that this carefully prepared Report has not met with more response from the Government.

My Lords, may I, as briefly as I possibly can, sketch out the disabilities and difficulties under which British East Africa is groaning as regards this most important question? First, there are the great delays in granting land. I have heard more than one person say it is no use going to East Africa, you cannot get any land, and, although there is any quantity of vacant land, the occupation of which would bring prosperity to the country, this statement is almost true. I will quote a passage from the Report, referring to applications—

> "At present an application is referred backwards and forwards from one Government Department to another. It gets pigeon-holed in one place and then, after being at considerable pains dug out, it is as often as not forwarded on to another office, there to suffer a like fate. This method of dealing with applications has caused great loss and irritation."

Then, my Lords, I come to the all-important question of system of tenure, or rather lack of system of tenure, for system there is none. We have no security of tenure of any sort, and no freedom of transfer, and without these two things the country cannot go ahead. Transfer is only allowed with the permission of the Governor. May I quote again from the Report—

> "But the mere fact that the power exists to deprive a man of his freehold cannot but have the effect of diminishing the value of his title, etc., and possibly preventing the land being put to the use to which it is best suited. Again, the rule as it exists at present, not only has the effect of preventing a person who is unable to develop his holding selling his interest therein to someone else who is able to develop it, but also prevents him from raising money on it by loan or mortgage and obtaining the capital which is necessary to enable him to turn his farm to account."

> "The position of affairs at the present moment, if not relieved, can only have one termination. A settler without sufficient means, though having an interest in a potentially valuable property into which he may have put his whole capital, will be ruined because the law prevents him either from developing or parting with it."

This situation, my Lords, has not been relieved; it is more acute than ever.

The noble Earl, the Secretary of State, apparently does not seem to have grasped the Committee's suggestions with reference to removing the restrictions on the transfer of land. They ask that—

> "Title and tenure should be made as secure and the terms for settlers as easy as possible, having due regard to the observance by them of the general conditions and obligations for development."

My Lords, in reply to this, Lord Elgin observes—

> "The evils of allowing land in a new country to be transferred freely without any regard to the intention of the tranferee to utilise within a reasonable time the resources of the land are not confined to the period of depression which inevitably follows a time of inflated speculation, but have a wider scope."

I cannot see that the Committee ever suggested that the Government should allow land to be transferred without an obligation on the new owner to utilise within a reasonable time its resources.

I think, my Lords, a sound view to take of land transfer is that Government is justified in imposing reasonable conditions for development when granted in the first instance. The simplest condition to impose is the expenditure of a certain sum of money on a certain area of land of a particular class. But there is no reason why this land should not be transferred at any time, provided the condition remained an obligation on the purchaser to spend either the full amount or the balance which remained unspent by the first owner.

The fear of the noble Earl that the East Africa Protectorate may follow in the footsteps of Australia is, in view of the prosperity of that country, rather a difficult one to understand. I fancy those interested in East Africa would rejoice at such a calamity. The fact that several of the Australian Governments—

> "Have been driven to re-purchase at higher rates, with a view to closer settlement, lands which were originally alienated for insignificant sums"—

rather points to the fact that the holders of these large areas must have provided the Governments, by their enterprise and speculation, directly or indirectly, with the means of re-purchasing alluded to. The operation of the present system in East Africa is most injurious, as, while it does not prevent the capitalist with money at his command from developing his property, it prevents the small industrious settler of limited means from raising further capital upon his land and the improvements he has already carried out upon it, as he can give no security which would be acceptable to any bank or business man.

The noble Earl has referred the Committee to the history of Australia. My Lords, I have followed the noble Earl's advice, and I venture to suggest that the Torrens Act is worthy of consideration by the Colonial Office. It appears to me that it would safeguard the Government and give those in East Africa what they chiefly ask for. May I quote one more paragraph from the Report—

> "Many of the complaints which have been laid before them, and much of the irritation which has been felt in the past can be removed at once by a stroke of the pen; but, at the same time, the Committee believe that the interests of the country will best be served if a somewhat more liberal policy in connection with the land is adopted by the Government in the future."

This, my Lords, does not mean granting more land or cheaper land to an individual.

> "The cost of carrying out such recommendations as the Committee have suggested would not be small, but it must be remembered that, at the present moment, the whole development of the country is checked and the Government is daily losing revenue, both directly in rents, and indirectly in general revenue, owing, as the Committee believe, to the immediate want of action on the lines of these recommendations which they have felt it their duty to make."

My Lords, I cannot leave this subject without a passing reference to the railway management. Although the railway showed a considerable profit last year, I cannot help thinking that this profit should be very much increased. The complaints are numerous and almost universal, comprising high rates, delays in transit, insufficient passenger trains, unnecessary time taken by passenger trains, obsolete rolling stock, and staff consisting of too many Indians and too few Europeans in the lower grades. I do not wish to express an opinion on the justification or otherwise of these complaints, beyond saying that they are so general as to call for a thorough inquiry.

Now, my Lords, I come to the most serious statement yet made by the local Press regarding the welfare of the country. It was in reply to a letter from a man who wished to settle, asking for information, and was to the effect—

> "That until the Administration cleans up its hearth, no white man should give this country a thought."

My Lords, what an advertisement for East Africa. I fear I must, to a great extent, agree with that statement, except as regards capitalists and those who can afford to wait. I believe that very little would suffice to place British East Africa on such a footing as would permit the due development of her great natural, agricultural, and pastoral resources. I will venture to suggest to the noble Earl that an independent Commissioner or Commission should be appointed thoroughly to investigate the general affairs and state of the country for the purpose of suggesting a remedy for the better administration of the Colony.

I must apologise for having taken up so much of your Lordships' time, and I hope the noble Earl will be able to present your Lordships with Papers. I would especially ask if we might have the Report from the Commissioner of Lands, if such a Report is in existence, and possibly the noble Earl could let us have the Railway Estimates for 1907–8.

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty for Papers relating to British East Africa."—(*The Lord Hindlip.*)

*THE EARL OF MAYO: My Lords, I desire to support Lord Hindlip. I am very glad he has taken this subject up, and I am sure your Lordships will welcome the fact that he has spoken for the first time in this House, as he is one of those who have bought property in British East Africa, and therefore can speak as one who has been on the spot and knows from having seen how things are going on what are the actual facts of the case. I desire to speak really more of the state of the Land Laws. There are three documents available by which one can judge of what is going on in the East Africa Protectorate, and the wants and wishes of the Colonists. The first is the Report of the Land Committee appointed by the late Sir Donald Stewart, and published in 1905; the second is the despatch of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, dated 23rd March, 1906; and the third is the petition of the Colonists' Association of British East Africa presented to Parliament in July of last year. The Protectorate of British East Africa has not experienced a gold rush. If there had been a gold rush the country would have developed more quickly, and there would have been money available to pay for many of the officials, duties, and work necessary in a new country. The colonists and settlers are essentially agriculturists, and land and the cultivation of land is their means of livelihood.

I must draw attention for one moment to the Land Committee to which Lord Hindlip alluded. The Report is unanimous, and a fact to be remembered is that there were two Judges of the country on the Committee. The Report avoids all reference to the past and causes which have led to the existing state of affairs in the land office, and the consequent check on the general development of the country. The Committee deal rather with what they think will remedy the existing state of affairs. What is the existing state of affairs of which this Committee complain? On page 2 of their Report they say—

> "Strict covenants are inserted in leases, and assignments or transfer of interest is only allowed with the permission of the Commissioner."

The Report also says—

> "Many leases have been granted for short terms and in townships with the most stringent building clauses attached; and at the end of the term it is required that all buildings put up shall become the property of the Government. Property qualifications have been required for persons desirous of taking up land. In cases of breach of covenant of a lease the land is liable to forfeiture to the Government, without any compensation whatsoever for any permanent improvement which may have been made to it."

If the Protectorate is to be considered as one vast estate with the Government acting as a private landlord it is doubtful whether it is best for the development of the country. There is no representative Government as yet in the country, and it is open to question if the present state of affairs, namely, the Government as a private landlord and a settler as his tenant, tends to develop a new country in any way or to help the work of settlement. The Report goes on to say that the existing system is largely due to a desire on the part of the Government to check speculation. Over-speculation in land we all know is bad for any new country. We have experience of that in its grossest state in the United States of America. But the Report says—

> "These evils are outweighed by the fact that an impetus is given to genuine business and capital is attracted where the greatest possible security is given to title and the greatest possible freedom to transfer of interests in land."

Let me now state what the regulation is that the Land Committee complain of and their recommendation on the subject. By Article 9 of the Crown Lands Ordinance of 1902 if a man buys land and does not occupy it for twelve months, the Land Commissioner gives notice that if he does not appear within six months and show he is going to develop the land it is forfeited to the Government, that is to say, the Commissioner. If a man pays down money for land he would naturally not let his money lie idle. But if after spending money on experiments in crops and buildings he finds that he is unable to work the land to his satisfaction, and he naturally wishes to part with it to the highest bidder, under the Article I have mentioned it is open for the Government to step in and take the land from him without either returning him the original purchase price or giving him compensation for any permanent improvements he has made. It is not to be supposed that the Government would do this lightly and insist on the strict letter of the law. But the fact remains that the power exists to deprive a man of his freehold, and that must diminish the value of his title. We can all understand that this very strict Article of the Crown Lands Ordidance is to prevent the locking up of large areas of land.

Let us see what the Committee recommend on this point. They are very clear about it, and they recommend that the area of land should be limited, that leases should be granted instead of inserting covenants in a freehold which the purchaser is liable to be deprived of. That seems perfectly reasonable and fair.

Then one word with regard to the small settlers. The Report says that the area of homesteads should not be so large, and instead of a settler acquiring a right to 640 acres mostly by pre-emption he should be given 320 acres outright with no right of pre-emption. If a man takes up a small quantity of land and has a right of pre-emption for a large quantity, he very often finds that he cannot deal with the large quantity properly, but if he is given a small quantity outright he knows what future is before him, and he is not likely to spend his money or his capital in useless development.

With regard to the land and survey offices they are working as a combined department, with a very inadequate staff, the result being unsatisfactory.

> "Instances occur again and again in the course of the evidence of persons who have applied for land and have received favourable answers to their applications, waiting for months and months in the country and spending their time and capital doing nothing and finding themselves at the end of that period apparently no nearer to obtaining their object than at the date when they first applied."

The Committee recommend that there should be a permanent Land Board, and this I think is the most practicable and sensible suggestion in the Report. They recommend that the Commissioner for Land should be Chairman of the Board, that the second member should be the Commissioner for Agriculture and Forests, and the third the Commissioner for Native Affairs, these three to form the permanent *ex officio* members, having power to add to their number two or more assessors of local experience appointed with the approval of His Majesty's Commissioner. There you have a permanent Board, and His Majesty's Commissioner, who practically has the right of vetoing any other appointments, would see that the co-opted members were proper, sound people who understood their business.

Then with regard to the survey. The duties of the Director of Survey should be kept absolutely and entirely distinct from those of the Land Board. That is the recommendation of the Committee. Further, the Report goes on to say that the present system of survey is practically valueless and leads to delay and muddle. Of course, the ideal plan would be a trigonometrical survey of the whole country. But there is no necessity for going to that enormous expense at once, there being no reason why a proper survey should not be made in the districts where it is most required, and when that proper survey is made even in those parts, as Lord Hindlip has suggested, and as is suggested in the Report, there is no reason why the Torrens Act should not be applied. I do not think I need tell your Lordships what the Torrens Act is. Your Lordships are doubtless aware how simple the obtaining of a certificate is with all the details of mortgage and encumbrances of the property marked upon it. On the whole, I consider that the recommendations of the Committee are sensible and moderate.

But the Answer of the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies claims one's attention. The noble Earl recognises the care and ability shown in the compilation of the Report, and agrees that a survey should be taken in hand at once. Estimates, I believe, are provided in the year 1907 for carrying out the same. May I ask the noble Earl what has been done? I am aware that an officer has been appointed to carry out this survey, and I hope with sufficient staff. The noble Earl states in Paragraph III. in his despatch—

> "I have decided to take no further action in regard to those proposals"—

that is the Land Committee's proposals—

> "pending the report of the officer whom it is proposed to appoint under the title of Commissioner for Lands."

That officer has been appointed and has been out nine or ten months, and the Protectorate is anxiously waiting for his Report. One would think that an interim Report might have been furnished by now. In Paragraph 4 of the despatch the Secretary of State says—

> "While regretting the delay in dealing with these questions, I trust the material addition to the staff of the Survey Department and the appointment of an Assistant Crown Advocate will enable the existing system of land settlement to be worked at once with better results."

I must draw your Lordships' attention to the fact that the whole of the Land Committee's Report points out that there is no system at all, and that delays and loss of money to intending settlers is the result of the present state of affairs. In another paragraph of his despatch the noble Earl says—

> "On page 3 they (the Committee) write, 'All restrictions on transfer and forfeitures without compensation should be abolished as far as possible. Title and tenure should be made as secure and the terms for settlers as easy as possible'"—

that is in the Report, but now we come to the saving clause—

> "having due regard to the observance by them of the general conditions and obligations for development."

On this particular paragraph the noble Earl delivers a lecture upon the evils of over-speculation in Australia.

But I cannot find that the Land Committee say anything in favour of speculation; in fact, they rather deprecate there being anything that would lead up to it, and they have suggested certain safeguards. The Secretary of State says—

> "I shall be unable to assent to any legislation which facilitates the holding of land in large areas for speculative purposes, either by permitting large grants of land without adequate securities for its development, or by permitting the holders of smaller areas to part with their holdings without imposing on the transferee a similar liability to make use of the land."

As I said before, I cannot find anything in the Report of the Land Committee that warrants the suggestion of the noble Earl. In fact, I say that the Land Committee's Report and its recommendations have been damned with the faintest of faint praise, and that many months after it was issued.

I must allude for one moment to the petition of the Colonists' Association of British East Africa. I will only refer to what they say about the land laws, but they deal with many other subjects. On page 5 of the petition they say that—

> "The imperfections of the land and transfer laws are serious, retarding settlement and impeding the progress of the country, and after one year's delay on the part of the Colonial Office it is a serious injustice to this Protectorate that reforms in the land laws should be retarded still longer."

That petition was presented to the House of Commons in July last. The Colonists' Associations speak of the magnificent possibilities offered by British East Africa for white agricultural and pastoral settlement.

I have no doubt that my speech will be marked as a doleful complaint. I cannot help it being a complaint, as the documents are not very cheerful reading. But there is a gleam of comfort in the "Colonial Reports (Annual), East Africa Protectorate" for 1905–6. On page 61 we read—

> "It has been the constant aim of the Government to remove these disabilities"

—that is to say the disabilities which the settlers have suffered from certain provisions of the land laws which do not meet with their general approval—

> "where they were found to exist, and though it has not been possible in so new a country as East Africa to concede all that the more advanced views of the Colonists would seem to demand, there can be no question that a great deal has been and is being done in the direction indicated."

But these disabilities have not been entirely removed; I do not suppose they can be, but the Colonists complain that they have not been removed sufficiently. As that Report is for 1905–6 and was issued to both Houses in March, 1907, I hope the noble Earl will tell us what is being done up to the present time, as, most of the recommendations of the Land Committee Report having been set aside, the settlers in this Protectorate seem to be in much the same circumstances as they were before any Report was made, any petition presented, or any despatch written.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Earl of ELGIN): My Lords, I rather gather from the remarks of the noble Lords who have spoken that they were not aware that last year we agreed that a Legislative Council should be appointed for British East Africa. That Legislative Council has been appointed, and therefore the Protectorate of East Africa has now become the Colony of East Africa under a Governor in the ordinary form. The Protectorate of East Africa was until about two years ago under the administration of the Foreign Office. The administration was assumed in 1895, I think, and continued under the Foreign Office until 1905, but it is since 1905 that the Office which I have the honour to represent has been responsible for its administration. I, therefore, speak only with regard to that limited period, but even taking the history of the seven years, I think your Lordships will readily agree that in a country like this, of such vast extent, almost entirely unsurveyed, and with what I think the noble Lord rather put in the background, a very large native population, there are considerable questions which have to be faced, and considerable caution has to be exercised in making the arrangements under which the government of the country is carried on, particularly in the question of land.

The noble Lord who spoke first I quite admit showed me great courtesy, because he came to me last year to consult or to confer with me with regard to some of the difficulties which he has now mentioned, and at my request he deferred bringing the matter forward in this House on that occasion. But the noble Lord has now made several criticisms—I will not put it more severely than that—of the administration which is now going on. I cannot agree that the administration is so defective as the noble Lord has represented to the House. I believe that looking to the necessarily limited staff, especially for so large an area of country, the administration has been effectively, and I am sure honestly carried on, and I rather deprecate the bringing forward of some of the cases which the noble Lord has mentioned to-night without at any rate giving me some notice in order that I might at once deal distinctly with the propositions which he has made regarding them. He mentioned a case which I understood him to say had attracted some attention, but in regard to which I am entirely unable to give an answer offhand. All I can say in regard to it is that, if he desires to pursue the matter further, if he will give me the particulars, I shall be quite prepared to deal with it.

The noble Lord seemed to think that the only thing to be done, or the chief thing to be done, was to introduce a white police, and to carry on the administration of the government of the country more by the agency of white men than of the black men who are now employed both in the King's African Rifles and the police. There is one great obstacle to our accepting the advice of the noble Lord, and that is that the expense would be absolutely prohibitive. It would be perfectly impossible to employ any considerable number of white mounted police in East Africa except at a cost which would very seriously increase the already considerable grant-in-aid which the taxpayers of this country have to pay. Besides that, it is the opinion of our officers on the spot that for many purposes the white man is not so effective as the black man, in consequence of the difficulties of climate.

I acknowledge that the greater part of this discussion turns upon the subject which the noble Earl who spoke last dwelt upon exclusively, namely, the land question. I think noble Lords have not given me quite the position which I should like to take up as regards the Land Committee's report. I do not think I rejected the Land Committee's Report; in fact, I think I shall be able to show that I did not do so. But I did criticise it from one particular point of view, as to whether it is expedient in the interest of the country that land should be held in large areas by single individuals or combinations of individuals, and whether there is to be free transfer in regard to those areas. I called attention to the analogy and the example of the Australian Colonies. I think it was rather an ingenious argument of the noble Lord that if the Governments of the Australian Colonies have found it necessary since that time to re-purchase lands which they had allowed to pass out of their control in this manner, that is an evidence of the prosperity of the country, and, therefore, of the satisfactory nature of the policy which they adopted at the time. But I do not quite see that that is an argument which will hold water. After all, the Governments of the Australian Colonies were in possession of the land originally, and that they should have to re-purchase the land in order that they may again distribute it in a manner more desirable in the interests of their country seems to me to prove that the first and original distribution was not on correct lines. I admit that this question of the transfer of land is one which has been debated. I could, if necessary, give examples of the difficulty arising not only in Australia, but also in Canada, where I believe the development of Ontario was impeded by the great grants of land there, and also some difficulty has arisen in Natal from the manner in which land was held. All I have done in this despatch is to say that we cannot agree to the holding of land for speculative purposes. That is the distinct position which I put forward. I may be allowed to quote it.

"On the general tenor of this Report I would observe that while I am as anxious as the Committee can be to encourage the settlement and development of the Protectorate by persons either of large or small capital, I consider the evils of unrestricted speculation in land much more serious than the Committee appear to regard them as being."

Therefore I proceeded later in the despatch to say—

"With these examples before me I fear in the interests of the future prosperity of the Protectorate I shall be unable to assent to any legislation which facilitates the holding of land in large areas for speculative purposes."

THE EARL OF MAYO: The Committee have never recommended that.

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: No. I am obliged to the noble Earl for reminding me of that point. The Committee, no doubt, did not recommend it, but they did say they were in favour of the free transfer of land. Of course, this is a debateable point. They take one view of the effect of allowing free transfer of land, and I venture to take the other.

Then as to the practical part of the Committee's Report, I have not, as I think I shall be able to show, been unreasonably obstructive. The only reasons for postponing decisions on the practical matter raised in the Committee's Report was not this particular dictum, but the condition of the administration of the Protectorate itself. I pointed out that I considered it was necessary to appoint a Land Commissioner, and that I should wish to have the Land Commissioner's Report in order that I might deal with the Committee's Report itself. I think that was a reasonable and prudent course of action, and it is the one I have pursued. In May, 1906, I was fortunate enough to secure the services of a gentleman whom I had known myself in India as a distinguished Civil servant, Colonel Montgomery. He had held a high position in the Punjab Civil Service, and was willing to assume this post in the East Africa Protectorate. Colonel Montgomery was, therefore, appointed Land Commissioner, and he has been in the Protectorate. I am glad to inform the noble Earl that I have Received his Report—not an interim report—which I shall be perfectly willing to lay on the Table. I have not only received his Report, but I have answered it, and in that despatch I have dealt with a good many of the points raised by the Land Committee and commented on by the noble Lords who have spoken. In the result we have directed that a new Ordinance should be drafted for our consideration dealing with the whole of the land question. I will not go into details, since it is for the local Government to draft the details and submit them to us. I might mention that we have approved, and do approve of the appointment of a Land Board on which there shall be representatives of the settlers. I hope the noble Lord will therefore see that in the question of the administration of the land in this territory we have really no object in view in the Colonial Office except that it should be administered on lines which are just, not only to those who go out and are willing to invest their money in land in that country, but also to the country as a whole, because as I have already remarked, this is not a country only of the white man. In one of these petitions there is an assertion that it is a white man's country. I cannot imagine a statement that has so little foundation. We have not an actual census, but the population is estimated at 4,000,000. Of these, about 25,000 are Asiatics, principally from India, and 2,000 are white men. I think your Lordships will agree that for the administration of territory inhabited in that manner we, and now the local Government under us, have responsibilities towards the natives which we cannot possibly forget.

The noble Earl asked me to say what we really had done. As far as the Colonial Office is concerned, we have been in charge of the administration for about two years. I have before me a summary of the subjects we have had to deal with in the course of that time. In the first place, we have had to undertake the definition of various boundaries, especially the boundaries of German East Africa and Abyssinia, and in the second place we have had to consider the staff and provide for the increase in the staff so far as our funds would admit, especially for dealing with the questions arising in connection with settlers—first of all the Commissioner of Lands of whom I have spoken, and we have also made additions to the survey. I am afraid I cannot give the actual additions, but I can supply them if the noble Lord wishes to have them. The survey is now a distinct Department under an able officer, Captain Smith, and as the proper survey of this country is one of the most important elements on which we can proceed to allocate land, we shall certainly do everything in our power to expedite their proceedings. The next head, I think, is the law, of which I have already spoken. We have considered representations of the settlers, and the local Government is engaged in drafting amending ordinances on that subject. In agriculture we have appointed a gentleman who was Assistant Director of Agriculture in the Transvaal to report on the whole subject. That Report we are still awaiting, but in the meantime he is assisting the Department and the Department is assisting him.

Then I come to a matter which interests some noble Lords, and that is the question of forests. We have in this dominion extremely valuable forests from two points of view. They have large intrinsic value of their own, if and when they can be properly developed, but they are also of immense value with regard to the water supply of the country. Any action taken by the Government to deal with these forests in a way to bring about their destruction might be absolute ruin to many, if not all, of the interests of this great dominion. I do not hesitate to say that it is incumbent upon us to be extremely careful in any step we take for the effective working of these forests.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: Could the noble Earl tell the House, since he is discussing the question of forests, whether the Government have assessed the approximate value of these forests, and whether it is true the Government have already granted concessions to certain firms to work them?

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: I have had an estimate given me in a Report.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: Could you give it?

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: I think I should prefer not to give the actual estimate, but it was a very large sum indeed. We have not arranged any concessions yet, and that is the reason I was making a caveat with regard to the matter just now. Perhaps I ought not to be so precise as that. There had been concessions of forests granted before I assumed office, but we have not in regard to a special forest which no doubt the noble Duke has in mind granted any concessions as yet. We have called in the aid of an expert, Mr. Hutchings, who has been the head of the same department in Cape Colony for some years, and he has made reports on certain of these forests, and we have now appointed him chief conservator for the Colony. I have no doubt that under his direction we shall be able to meet the views of those who wish to work the forests, and yet to keep them, as is absolutely essential. We have also endeavoured through the assistance of a gentleman from the Geological Survey to investigate further water supplies, which are very necessary in certain parts of the country. I am afraid that so far we have not got much more than negative results, but even so, that prevents expenditure which might otherwise be incurred through ignorance of the circumstances. Again, in Nairobi, we have considered a scheme for the improvement of the sanitation, and though that scheme in its complete form is a very large and costly one—one that we cannot face all at once—we have in the present Estimates provided a sum for an instalment of the work that is so necessary for this place, where there is a certain European population.

Noble Lords asked me about the railway. The Uganda railway is a subject which has attracted a good deal of attention from time to time. On this occasion I think I can mention it, in one direction at any rate, from a satisfactory point of view. I can give the receipts for the last three years. In 1904–5 the net receipts were £2,639; in 1905–6 they were £55,676, and in 1906–7 they were £76,150. I think if there were any railway directors in the House those figures might make their mouths water in some respects. Then I should like to notice that we do not overcharge our customers, as I find that the rates imposed on most grains and seeds average about a ½d. per ton mile. I should also say that in order to develop this traffic still further, additions have been made and further additions are contemplated to the steamers and wharves on the lake from which a great deal of the traffic comes.

Then, one word as regards the natives. In the course of these years we have settled one large tribe, the Masai, on a reserve, and that is of great importance because it opened up a valley called the Rift Valley, which is suitable for the occupation of white men, to that form of occupation. We have had disturbances in the Nandi country, but those have been got over, though I am sorry to say they involved an expedition. But the people are settling down, and they are now paying hut tax regularly and without demur. We have inserted in these Estimates for the first time some grants for education through the missionary societies, who have done good work in that direction, and we have arranged that a Secretary for Native Affairs should be appointed.

With regard to the position of white men, there is this to be borne in mind. In 1906 an ordinance was passed, which provided for trial by jury for Europeans in certain cases, and an additional Judge was appointed to prevent delay in the proceedings. With regard to the police affairs, we have had some reorganisation. We have appointed new officers, and we have defined the duties of the police under a new police ordinance. We have also provided for a small white police force. It is impossible to have a large force, but so far as it was possible to go we have not disregarded that wish which was expressed by the settlers.

Now there is one other thing I have to say in regard to the position of this country, which is not perhaps quite so satisfactory. We are still dependent on a grant in aid. As in the case of the railway, so in regard to the general revenue there is a satisfactory increase. In 1905–6 the receipts were £270,000, and in 1907–8 our Estimate is £557,000; but, on the other hand, our expenditure has increased from £418,000 to £803,000, which means that there is still a charge for a grant in aid on the taxpayers of this country of £150,000, in addition to the sums which we have to provide for the interest and sinking fund of the Uganda railway. The position I would like to put before your Lordships is this. This is a country which is still in the earlier processes of development. When that is the case we cannot expect to move so rapidly or so surely as we can in later stages; but I think what I have laid before your Lordships—and I have done it as freely and as frankly as I could—will show that we are moving, that we have great hopes—I would almost say great expectations—that as this moves on we shall endeavour to meet the wishes which have been expressed by the noble Lords who have brought this matter before the House. But I wish to insist once more that in our administration of this country we cannot look only to those who, no doubt greatly for the benefit of the country, have gone from Europe and settled, and taken possession of lands which they can make the best use of, but we must bear in mind and exercise the greatest caution in order not to overlook the interests of the great populations which the course of events has entrusted to our keeping.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: We all listened with interest and pleasure to the statement made by the noble Lord who introduced this subject to that House. He speaks with authority upon this question, for he is himself a pioneer and is probably the only Member of this House who can speak on these matters with knowledge derived form personal experience on the spot. Therefore, we listen with attention to whatever he has to say on the subject. I do not think the noble Lord has any reason to be dissatisfied with the statement which he has elicited from the Secretary of State for the Colonies. The noble Lord naturally expresses what may be termed the local view of those who have settled in this part of the British Empire. But there is another point of view which we cannot leave out of sight—that which I suppose will be described as the Downing Street point of view. Although hard things are very often said about those who hold the Downing Street point of view it is none the less necessary that that view should be held by some people, because while these undeveloped regions are under our management and control we must regard ourselves as trustees, with very responsible duties in regard to them. In this case we are dealing with a region of great extent, with large undeveloped resources, which have had necessarily to be administered by a very small staff. The Secretary of State has not spoken at all too strongly of the obligations under which we are to do nothing in regard to this particular Colony without bearing fully in mind the interest of the great native population already there. We owe that to the native tribes; it would be a grievous hardship on them if we allowed them to be crushed out of existence before the influx of European settlers. And we owe it to ourselves, because if these races, some of which are very warlike, are treated with insufficient consideration, you may depend upon it the settlers themselves will suffer for it in the end. I therefore fully admit that in dealing with the land question as it presents itself in British East Africa we must proceed with the utmost caution. That I think is the explanation of those particular provisions in the Land Ordinance to which the noble Lord referred as bearing hardly on the settlers. If we were dealing with the tenure of land in a settled country, it would be different. But these are reservations made with reference to the transition period during which the Colony is being opened up to settlement. Therefore while, on the one hand, it is most desirable that we should spare no pains to draw settlers to the country and make the terms offered to them as attractive as possible, on the other hand I believe the noble Earl to be right in holding that we must be careful how we alienate permanently large areas of good land, or even of country covered by forests, in our endeavour to obtain the introduction of a European population.

The noble Earl is, I think, right to set his face against what he has spoken of as unrestricted speculation in land. Nothing can be more unfortunate than that a comparatively virgin territory should be handed over to become the sport of such speculation. This particular Colony is now opening a new chapter; it has passed from the Foreign Office to the Colonial Office, and it now becomes a Crown Colony with a legislative council of its own. I was glad to hear from the noble Earl that he has been able to secure the services of an eminent Indian official to take charge of the most important question of land survey.

THE EARL OF ELGIN: He is the Land Commissioner.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I think the noble Earl is entitled to say that he desired to await the full information which he will receive from that source before he committed himself upon some of the points to which the noble Lord behind me has drawn attention.

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: I said that that was the reason why a request for delay appeared in my first despatch, but I have since received a Report, which I have answered and am prepared to lay on the Table.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I am glad to be corrected by the noble Earl. There is, I understand, to be a Land Board with representatives of the settlers upon it. I think, therefore, the noble Lord behind me may take it that the representations which he has made to-night, and which have been made by those who are acting with him, are sure to receive the full attention to which they are entitled.

I will only say one word more to express the satisfaction with which I heard the noble Earl's reference to the Uganda Railway. That undertaking has been a frequent subject of debate in and out of this House. Many hard things have been said about it. It was in the first instance a political railway, and we do not always expect political railways to pay. It was constructed with extraordinary rapidity, and in the face of great difficulties, with very insufficient surveys. All the dice, so to speak, were loaded against it, and I am glad to know that in spite of that it is prospering and I believe it has a great future before it.

LORD HINDLIP: May I thank the noble Earl for promising to present to the House the Report of the Land Committee? I would also associate myself with the noble Marquess in saying that I have no reason to be dissatisfied with the reply of the noble Earl. We in East Africa do not at all wish to disturb the natives; on the contrary, we look upon the natives as a most necessary adjunct to the development of the country; we cannot develop the land without their help.

On Question, Motion agreed to, and ordered accordingly.

ROYSTON SCHOOL—APPOINTMENT OF HEAD-MASTER.

*The Earl of DARTMORTH rose to call attention to the action of the Board of Education in connection with the Royston non-provided school, West Riding of Yorkshire; and to move for Papers.

The noble Lord said: I make no apology for bringing this question before your Lordships' House, because I think it is a very important one. There are a great many cases in connection with the action of the Board of Education that suggest oppressive administration, and no doubt the most convenient way of raising those questions would be in another place when the Education Estimates are before the House of Commons. But unfortunately last year there was no opportunity of discussing them, and this year that other place appears to be so busy dealing with other people's business that it has not much time for attending to its own. Therefore I venture to bring the matter before your Lordships. I propose to deal with only one of these cases, although as I say there are a good many others which no doubt will come up for consideration before long. I take the case of the Royston school because it seems to me that it traverses what I believe is a leading principle of our Constitution, that you must not try to achieve by administration that which Parliament refuses to allow by legislation.

The facts are these: the Royston national school is a school near Wakefield, a mixed school with accommodation for 256 children, and an average attendance of 221. Last autumn the head-master resigned, and in accordance with the duty imposed upon them by the Act of 1902 the managers proceeded to appoint a successor. There were sixty-seven candidates, whose applications were gone into, three were selected, and finally, on November 2nd of last year, a decision was arrived at. Two out of the three selected candidates, viz., Mr. Milnes and Mr. Gardam, obtained an equal number of votes on the board of managers. In accordance with the provisions of the Act the chairman of the board of managers, who in this case is the vicar of the parish, gave a casting vote in favour of Mr. Milnes. The minority of the managers appealed to the local education authority, the West Riding County Council, attributing motives. I will not go into those motives because there are motives suggested for their desiring the appointment of Mr. Gardam which I think are even stronger than those attributed to the supporters of Mr. Milnes. On the strength of this communication the local authority on November 21st refused to confirm the appointment of Mr. Milnes on educational grounds, those being the only grounds on which a local authority can interfere. The managers appealed against this action to the Board of Education, denying the imputations made, and giving their reasons for appointing Mr. Milnes. The reasons were very simple—that in their opinion Mr. Milnes was the best man, that it was a mixed school, that the other teachers being women they considered a married head-master would be better than an unmarried man (Mr. Milnes is married and Mr. Gardam is not), and that Mr. Milnes has had experience as a head-master in another West Riding school at Sharlston, while Mr. Gardam had been assistant master at the Royston school for some time. These were the reasons given, and I think most people would regard them as perfectly sufficient.

Communications passed between the Board of Education and the local education authority. The local education authority claimed full discretion in the appointment of teachers and referred to the fact that they had made a visit of inspection and tested the educational qualities of the master. I would call your Lordships' attention to what that test was. Two members of the West Riding County Council Education Committee, not experts, and an official, paid a surprise visit to the Sharlston school. They arrived at 1 o'clock talked to the head-master and examined the scheme of instruction. At 1.30 the children came in, and as soon as they were sitting in their places the inspection began. One class only was examined, and, according to Mr. Milnes, six questions were asked by the visitors and one by himself, the whole business being over in a quarter of an hour. It is true the local education authority suggests that the inspection lasted half an hour. It does not matter much whether it was a quarter of an hour or half an hour; it was on that test the local education authority refused to confirm the appointment of the properly appointed head-master. The Board of Education were not quite satisfied with the action of the local education authority and they express their opinion to that authority in the following terms—

> "The Board would certainly have felt great reluctance in basing a decision of so grave a character upon a single report made under the circumstances described, and it appears to them doubtful whether any teacher could do himself justice if suddenly called upon to give lessons in the presence of three comparative strangers, and under circumstances which must have made it difficult for the children to give their undivided attention."

I should like to quote also the opinion of the Board of Education on the educational fitness of Mr. Milnes. With regard to the ability and character of Mr. Milnes the Board quoted the testimony of Mr. Marvin, His Majesty's inspector, who on behalf of the Board made special inquiry. This is Mr. Marvin's Report—

> "Mr. Milnes is unquestionably one of the most deserving of the younger men in my own part of the West Riding, one out of quite a small number of men whom we would naturally have thought of for such promotion as this. I enclose copies of his reports, etc., both of my own and of other inspectors which, favourable as they are, do not fully describe his work or merits. He is a very popular teacher and has a great personal influence on the scholars, caring for them out of school as well as in, starting football clubs, etc., having in this way not only largely increased the number of scholars on the roll, but attaining generally the most regular attendance in the neighbourhood."

That is the opinion of the Board of Education on the educational capacities of Mr. Milnes.

Now we go a step further. There have been questions asked in another place, but their privileges of questioning are not so great as those we enjoy, and they have not been able to get a very satisfactory answer from the Minister in charge of the Board of Education. On the 10th April, Mr. Lane-Fox, the Member for Barkston Ash, asked a question to which he got the following reply—

> "The Board of Education have to satisfy themselves that the decision was come to on educational grounds. There is no shadow of doubt that the decision was come to in the present case on those grounds."

And that reply was given when the Board had in their possession the Report of their own inspector which I have just read! What is the position of the Board of Education in matters of this kind where there is a controversy? I was always under the impression that the Board of Education was the final Court of Appeal. Is it the duty of the Board of Education merely to satisfy themselves that the alleged grounds are educational, or have they to satisfy themselves that the grounds on which the refusal to confirm is made are genuine? If they have not to do the latter, it seems to me that the appointment of the head teacher by the managers becomes an absolute farce, and, that as in this case, a local education authority that object to a particular appointment may set up some perfectly impossible standard and refuse to confirm simply because the man has not come up to the impossible standard which they themselves have imposed. There is one other answer to which I should like to refer, given on 15th April to Lord Turnour—

> "The jurisdiction of the Board of Education, in this and similar cases, is strictly limited to determining whether the local education authority withheld their consent on educational grounds. These grounds in the present case are, of course, within the knowledge of the Board, but it seems unnecessary"—

and this is the important part of it—

> "and in the interests of the teacher undesirable to state publicly the precise educational reasons on which the local education authority grounded their decision that Mr. Milnes was unsuited for the post."

Now, my Lords, when we consider the difficulty of a teacher in his profession, when we consider how difficult especially is the position of a teacher in the Church of England schools—I think it is a cruel thing, unless there is some strong justification for it, to make a charge of that kind, that there is something behind that must not be made public in the interest of the teacher. It is in the interest of the teacher that I speak, and I claim that we shall have the facts upon which that answer was given made as public here as the statement itself was made in another place. My Lords, perhaps there may be some clue found to what has taken place. We do not forget that Mr. Birrell in his farewell to the Bill of last session said—

> "Whoever is at the Board of Education will administer the law fearlessly, without predilection, and with a perfectly bloodless indifference, to see that the due course of law is observed, and that the course of education is kept at a proper level."

We shall do all we can to assist the Board in maintaining Education at its proper level, and to see that the due course of law is observed; but when we talk of "bloodless indifference," do let us bear in mind that where the prospects of a teacher are concerned, though the indifference may be there, it will not be a "bloodless" one. It seems to me that the Board has tried to administer the Act so as to give to the local education authority such an extensive and unrestricted veto as practically to place in their hands the appointment of teachers in voluntary schools—an appointment especially reserved to the managers by the Act of 1902. It is notorious that the Board took the view that Mr. Milnes was thoroughly suited for the appointment as headmaster of Royston School, yet they allowed the local education authority to maintain their objection. As I say, I am speaking now in the interest of the teacher himself, and in his interest, and in justice to him, I would ask that we may have laid upon the Table all the correspondence that has taken place between the respective authorities—the Board of Managers, the local education authority, and the Board of Education—and all the Reports made during the time that Mr. Milnes has been headmaster of the Sharlston School.

Moved, "That there be laid before the House Papers in connection with the Royston non-provided school, in the West Riding of Yorkshire."—(*The Earl of Dartmouth.*)

*THE EARL OF CREWE: My Lords, the noble Lord has made a very full and clear statement of this somewhat remarkable case—a case which has excited very great interest throughout the West Riding of Yorkshire, and which has also excited, as the noble Lord stated, no small amount of comment in another place. Now the noble Lord has stated, I think with perfect accuracy, the main facts of the case, although I am not entirely in agreement with the conclusion he drew from those facts, or with all the comments which he made upon them. It is perfectly true that Mr. Milnes was appointed by the managers, as the noble Lord stated, by the casting vote of the vicar. Two of the managers then appealed to the local authority, asking them to overrule the managers' decision in favour of another candidate, Mr. Gardam. The result of that proceeding was that the Education Committee deputed two of their number, accompanied by their school inspector, to pay a visit to the school. The noble Earl stated, I think, that these gentlemen who attended were not experts, but as a matter of fact both of them had been for some years members of the Staffing Committee—one, I think, as Chairman—both had very full knowledge of the appointment of teachers, and their inspector was also, of course, a competent man. Well, they paid a visit to this school, and the conclusions they reached, and which were stated in a Report which they issued, were not entirely favourable to Mr. Milnes. I will not trouble the House by reading the Report now, although it is not very long, but the general result of it was that they stated that although they did not deny that he was a good schoolmaster, they did not think he was up to the mark as regards this particular school. They say in conclusion that "without wishing in any way unduly to reflect upon Mr. Milnes, who is, they believe, a very painstaking teacher, the Committee do not consider he is the proper man to put at the head of Royston National School, which has been very skilfully organised and taught by the retiring headmaster, and where he would have to deal with a greater number of children, and a larger staff, and receive a largely increased salary." That conclusion was arrived at after a visit which, I think, lasted about three-quarters of an hour, and as a result of this Report, the local education authority refused their consent to this appointment under Section 7 of the Act. Then the managers, as they are empowered to do——

LORD ASHBOURNE: Who was appointed?

*THE EARL OF CREWE: The alternative candidate, I suppose.

LORD ASHBOURNE: I, of course, do not know.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: The noble Earl stated that there was a tie between the two candidates, Nobody was appointed at the moment, of course, because the matter was under appeal. They appealed under Section 7. The Board made inquiry as to the fitness of Mr. Milnes, and they received a very excellent Report from one of their inspectors—a Report from which the noble Earl has quoted. In consequence of this, they suggested that the local authority had been misled in the opinion which they had formed, and they hoped that the matter would be reconsidered, and the appointment approved. This, however, the local authority refused to do, and the Board itself had to consider what was the proper course for them to take under the Act of 1902. I must remind the noble Lord that my right hon. friend Mr. McKenna does not sit administering justice under a palm tree, but he has to administer a particular Act of Parliament, and he is bound to be governed by the sections of that Act of Parliament. The section of that Act relating to this matter is this—

> "The consent of the local education authority shall be required to the appointment of teachers, but that consent shall not be withheld except on educational grounds."

And then a further subsection of the same clause says—

> "If any questions arise under this section between the local education authority and the managers of a school not provided by the authority that question shall be determined by the Board of Education."

Well, the Board had to consider what is meant by withholding consent to an appointment on educational grounds, and the result of their deliberations was the following letter. They said—

> "The duty of the Board in such cases is confined to determining in accordance with the provisions of Section 7 (I.) (c) of the Education Act, 1902, whether the consent of the authority is withheld upon educational grounds, and the authority informed the Board that after taking such steps as they deemed to be satisfactory and sufficient to ascertain the educational qualifications of Mr. Milnes, they have come to the conclusion that he is not up to the standard which they consider desirable, and for that reason have decided not to confirm his appointment. Under these circumstances the refusal of the authority appears to be based upon educational grounds within the meaning of the above-mentioned section, and the Board so determine. They are not prepared therefore to interfere with the discretion of the local authority in the matter."

In sending a copy of this letter to the local authority the Board added words, some of which the noble Lord quoted, but which by permission of the House I will read again. They said—

> "From the information before them the Board feel some doubt as to the correctness of the view taken by the authority as to Mr. Milnes' qualifications. The Board would certainly have felt great reluctance in basing a decision of so grave a character upon a single Report made under the circumstances described, as it appears to them doubtful whether any teacher could do himself justice if suddenly called upon to give lessons in the presence of three comparative strangers, and under circumstances which must have made it difficult for the children to give him their undivided attention."

It is obvious, I think, by this time to the House that the real, substantial question which the Board of Education had to decide was whether its jurisdiction is confined to determining whether the education authority's refusal is based upon educational grounds, or whether the Board has then to proceed to decide whether those educational grounds are adequate grounds—that is to say, whether the Board's estimate of the fitness of a teacher for a particular appointment is the same as the local authority's, and, if not, which is the right one. In view of the wording of the Act of Parliament the Board are advised, and have decided, that they have no jurisdiction to determine the adequacy of the educational grounds. If, of course, it was shown to them that the whole thing was not *bona fide*, if there had been no attempt to discover educational grounds, and if no Report had been made, the matter would have been different. But in this instance, where the grounds alleged by the authority are personal to the teacher—not merely showing that a better teacher could be found, but showing that this particular teacher was not suited to this particular school—which is what the local authority do show—the Board hold that they have no further jurisdiction to interfere in the matter. That is to say that, although the Board think in this particular instance that the conclusion at which the local authority have arrived is an incorrect one, they are not able to say that the local authority did not take such steps as established their *bona fides* in the matter.

*THE EARL OF DARTMOUTH: The Board said so in their own remarks, which have been read. They have said that the local authority did not take sufficient steps to find out. What you have just read yourself says it is not sufficient.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: No, but it is an educational test, and on educational grounds.

LORD ASHBOURNE: Does the letter contain what the noble Lord has just been stating—that it was not within the jurisdiction of the Board of Education to decide?

*THE EARL OF CREWE: No, I am stating what the opinion of the Board is. The statement that the Board has no jurisdiction is the opinion at which the Board arrived in considering the legal aspect of the case.

LORD ASHBOURNE: But that is not stated in the letter.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: No, that is not stated in the reply. The noble Earl says that we ourselves admit—the Board admit—that the examination was not sufficient. Well it might be possible on that to say, "Go down again and make a further inquiry;" and the local authority might do so; but of course there would be no guarantee that they would not arrive at the same conclusion at which they arrived on their first examination.

There is just one further point that is worth mentioning—that if the words "educational grounds" are taken to mean adequate educational grounds, it would appear to follow that the words of the latter part of the same subsection, alluding to religious grounds, must also be taken to mean adequate religious grounds. And after all, we did not draw this Act of 1902. I quite believe that if the noble Marquess had been in opposition and had been drawing the Act for somebody else to administer, he would have been quite willing to place upon the Board the onus of stating whether the educational grounds were adequate. But as he was in office at the time, he knew quite well that the Board of Education would not be prepared to take the responsibility of entering into a sort of competition with the local authority as to whether the fitness of a particular teacher for a particular school could or could not be established.

The noble Earl mentioned some of the Answers to Questions given by my right hon. friend in another place, and he seemed to think that a hardship had been inflicted upon the teacher in not publishing the Report of the local authority concerning him. I can assure the noble Earl that what my right hon. friend said was entirely in the interest of the teacher. He, in our opinion, is not a very well used man in this particular connection, and it does not seem that it would be in his interest to advertise still further the fact that the local authority found him, in their opinion, unfit to conduct this particular school. But as a matter of fact, on the 17th April last my right hon. friend was asked by Mr. Bridgeman in the first place—

> "Whether any directions with respect to the educational qualifications of teachers had been issued by the local educational authority for the West Riding of Yorkshire;"

and then the hon. Member went on to ask—

> "Whether the Report of that local education authority, as to the educational grounds on which consent to his appointment was withheld by that authority, is corroborated in any single respect by the Reports of the inspectors of the Board of Education; and whether he will consider the desirability of publishing the Reports of the local authority and of the Board's inspector."

> "I have no information,"

said my right hon. friend,

> "as to the first two paragraphs of the hon. Member's Question."

And he then went on to say:

> "I doubt whether, in the interests of the teacher, it is desirable to publish the Report which the Board had received from the West Riding County Council upon his teaching capacity, but as the hon. Member presses for it, I will lay copies of both Reports upon the Table."

And I suppose as far as the House of Commons is concerned, that has been done. No doubt it has not been circulated as a Parliamentary Paper, but it can be placed at the disposal of the noble Earl, or of noble Lords generally, if they would like to see it.

I may merely say in conclusion that the Board of Education bases its action entirely upon its duty under the Act of Parliament. It expresses no further opinion than I have expressed upon the particular merits of the case, but it considers itself limited in a particular way by the Act of Parliament, and of course it has been obliged to act accordingly.

*THE EARL OF DARTMOUTH: My Lords, I should like to say a word or two further, because, as I gather from what the noble Lord has just told us, he has implied that the local education authority at any rate, and possibly the Board of Education as well, are not satisfied with the teaching powers of Mr. Milnes for this particular school. The chairman of the West Riding Education Committee on the 19th February last wrote a letter to the *Yorkshire Post*. Of course it is not official, but this is his opinion of this case, and I should like to call the noble Lord's attention to this. Mr. Dunn says—

> "That he had not heard of one single word being said by any member of the education committee to the effect that Mr. Milnes was unfit for the post. . . . The competence of Mr. Milnes to take charge of the school has not been questioned, but it was considered that a few of the sixty or more candidates were preferable."

Here is the opinion of the head of the Education Committee of the West Riding County Council, and as regards his opinion that other candidates were better, surely the persons to judge which candidate is the best are the managers who go into all the circumstances of the case, and for their decision to be upset in this way is, I think, extremely hard, especially when there is a suggestion that there is something behind that action which in the interests of the teacher cannot be made public.

LORD ASHBOURNE: I think it is manifest from listening to the Lord President of the Council that he does not a bit like the job which has been cast upon his shoulders of trying to explain (it is impossible to defend) this transaction. In my opinion harsher measure never was meted out to any man than has been meted out to this gentleman who was elected to this post after consideration. I do not want to deduce anything unduly from anyone's manner, but it is perfectly plain from the letters, and from the action of the Board of Education, that they too did not like the job cast upon them, and they did their best, I am bound to say—except that they did not have the courage of their final opinion—to stand by this man, and ensure that he should not be treated harshly and unjustly.

My Lords, the matter is one that really does not stand a moment's examination. There is not one of your Lordships on either side of the House who does not feel that if he had had the decision of the matter, this man would not have been treated in this way, and that it was not reasonable, it was not fair, it was not English, so to treat him. I am not going to repeat the facts again. They lie in a nutshell. The barest, and the plainest, and the nakedest statement of the facts takes away the possibility of justifying what has been done. Here is a man who had served for a number of years as a master in a school. I believe he had always given satisfaction to the Board of Education. I have gathered that there were earlier Reports in addition to the particular one which has been referred to by my noble friend and the production of which he challenged. It appears that he had always been a deserving headmaster. Then he was elected, whether by a casting vote or not, I do not know; but he was elected by the managers, and their decision was sent up to be confirmed by the local education authority. For reasons which I will not now discuss—I wish to make no imputations — they refused to confirm the manager's decision. As I say, I make no imputation, and I assume that they acted upon their view of the merits of the facts. The appeal went from them in the proper legal way to the Board of Education, and the noble Earl has told us what view the Board of Education took. I believe the noble Earl was desirous—indeed, he was most obviously anxious—to tell everything to the House, but he has not read that clause. The subsection in question was subsection (3) of Clause 7. That was the clause under which the appeal was taken, and that clause commences thus—I have not the words before me just now, but I believe I am right—

"If any question arises between the local education authority and the managers of a school"

—not a particular question, be it noted, but "any" question—

"any such question is to be determined by the Board of Education."

And the Board of Education, it is manifest from all that took place on the correspondence and on the Report, took the view that it was a question for them, and they sent down one of their most trained and competent inspectors, who made a special Report upon the case, and reported strongly in favour of this man (I never heard a Report more strongly in favour of any man)—of the merits, the character, and the worth of this man as a headmaster. He was worthy of being selected, worthy of being retained, unworthy of having all his claims set aside, and of being sent adrift upon the world. What does all that indicate? That the Board of Education themselves shrunk from the task of confirming what was done by the local education authority; and in the letters that have been written, as well as by the Report of this trained inspector of their own, it is obvious that they did their very best, by expressing the strongest, most vigorous, and clearest opinion that this transaction should not be allowed to stand. The local education authority adhered to their views. They were wrong, and if the Board of Education had followed up their previous correct action—if I may presume so to describe it—of writing this clear letter in this man's favour, and sending down an inspector to get a Report—if they had said, "We must act upon our own clear views which we have already expressed in our letters, and which our inspector has expressed in the form of a Report which we accept and adopt"—if they had said, "under those circumstances, this being a question raised between the managers and the local authority, we decide that it is not a case in which we can shrink from our duty of confirming the appointment of this man"—then they would in my opinion have acted properly, and in a manner against which no exception could have been taken.

Lord Ashbourne.

***THE EARL OF CREWE**: Will the noble Lord go as far as to say that in his opinion, if we had done it, we should not have broken the law?

LORD ASHBOURNE: I prefer that that Question should be addressed to the Lord Chancellor. I never read the letter before, but I listened carefully to the noble Lord when he was reading it, and the words used at the end were that the Board were not prepared (why were they not prepared?) under the circumstances to overrule the discretion of the local authority.

***THE EARL OF CREWE**: What they said was—

"The refusal of the authority appears to be based upon educational grounds within the meaning of the above-mentioned section, and the Board so determine."

LORD ASHBOURNE: But I think the words that linger in my hearing are also to be found there, that: "under these circumstances the Board are not prepared to overrule the discretion of the local authority"; and the noble Earl qualified that again by introducing the statement that he did not say that if the Board arrived at the conclusion that the reason was not one which could be accepted it would not give an opinion. Surely there must be a point where they are bound to give effect to their own clear opinion against the action of others when it has been brought before them. If not, it would make this appeal really and truly worthless. It might be that it would not be a case of a casting vote. It might be a case where there was a majority of three-fourths of the managers, and it might be that the local education authority had said: "We do not mind this great consensus of local opinion; we will act upon our own opinion in this matter, although the local opinion may be composed of four-fifths of the managers, and although their opinion may be distinctly approved by the Board of Education." I submit that it is intelligible and reasonable that the law intended that such a question as this, being a question between the parties, should be decided upon a fair consideration of the facts, the merits, and the reason of the case. My Lords, it would not be reasonable to apply any other consideration, I suggest, to this case, otherwise the whole appeal, which is an appeal upon "any" question between the parties, could be made illusory and worthless. In the light of the discussion that has taken place I would very much wish that on a fairer view of the facts, the Board would consider whether they are bound—that is the question—as a matter of jurisdiction to ignore their own reading of the merits and the facts of the case, and to overrule the Report of their own inspector and say: "We are bound hand and foot; an appeal has come to us; we have a clear opinion that the appeal should be allowed, but there is something in the Act of Parliament that takes away our discretion, and we will not decide the question, because we do not think that under the circumstances of the case it would be convenient for us to do so."

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: My Lords, I had no idea of joining in this debate, but in view of what has fallen from the noble Earl the Lord President of the Council, I think it is only right that, as a recent Minister of Education, I should say a few words on the subject.

My noble friend (the Earl of Dartmouth) has so clearly stated the case, and has brought out so fully what is, in my opinion, the unjust treatment this teacher has received at the hands of the local education authority in the West Riding of Yorkshire, that I do not think it is at all necessary for me to enter into that question. But, my Lords, the Act of Parliament, as I read it during the time I was Minister of Education, laid down very clearly that except on educational grounds the education authority had no right to reverse the decision of the managers in the appointment of a teacher to a voluntary school. That, I think, was laid down in clear terms. As I gather from what I have heard in the course of this debate, the education authority in the West Riding seem to have been determined to assist the three out of six managers who were opposed to the appointment of this gentleman, and at the same time (as I gather merely from listening to the debate this evening) they suddenly, at a moment's notice, and without warning, sent down three members of their Education Committee, who were very likely gentlemen hostile to the whole system of denominational education, to make a surprise visit—swooping down upon this school, perhaps not giving either the master or the children a chance of doing their best, and condemning that master as being inefficient on educational grounds. As I say, I know nothing of the matter except what I have learnt from listening from the debate to-night, but that is how it strikes me, and if the view which I have formed is correct, I think it is most unfair to that teacher that he should be condemned in that way. I do not know that amongst the many certificates of qualifications that I have seen, I ever heard one of greater weight than that which was read by my noble friend Lord Dartmouth, with regard to the master whose interests he is now defending. I do not think the noble Earl (Lord Crewe) would for one moment challenge that, and yet for this reason—because he is declared, upon the result of this surprise visit, to be unfit on educational grounds to be appointed to this post—that man is practically ruined. My Lords, it seems to me a very hard case, and, to my mind, entirely contrary to the spirit of the Act of 1902. My noble and learned friend (Lord Ashbourne) has dealt with the matter from the legal aspect, and therefore I will not go further into that branch of the question; but what I should like to ask is this: Did the President of the Board of Education take legal opinion before he wrote that letter in answer to the letter of the local authority?

*THE EARL OF CREWE: Yes, certainly, the action taken was taken on legal advice.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: Then on that I say nothing.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: What legal advice?

*THE EARL OF CREWE: I will find out exactly.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: It seems to me to be so contrary to the spirit of the Act of 1902 that such an injustice should be brought about by the operation of that Act that I hope the noble Earl will consider the matter and bring it up again. I do not wish to say anything controversial, but what rankles in our minds is the threat held out by the noble Earl (the Earl of Crewe) in his concluding speech upon the Education Bill of last session, when he said that he feared its rejection would lead to harsh words and harsh actions. Perhaps this is one of those harsh actions. If so, I can only say that I am sorry to think that a great Department like the Board of Education should be able to bring itself to do such a harsh action to a man who is qualified, as far as I can gather, on every ground, simply because the local authority happens to be hostile to the system of denominational schools. I think it is a great advantage to us to have had this question raised by my noble friend (the Earl of Dartmouth), and I wish that I had known more of the details myself before entering upon the question. But, merely speaking offhand as a past President of the Council, I can only say that I deeply regret the line which has been taken in this case by the Board of Education.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord FITZMAURICE): I would ask permission to recall the attention of your Lordships to what is really the point before the House. It is not whether we think that the refusal of the West Riding Local Education Authority with regard to this particular teacher was harsh or not; nor are we really justified in discussing all the complicated facts of what is evidently a very controversial story.

*THE EARL OF DARTMOUTH: It is a very simple case.

LORD FITZMAURICE: I fully agree with what the noble Lord has just said across the House. The point is really a very simple one. Is the Board of Education justified or not in its construction of the sub-section of the Act of Parliament—Subsection (*c*) of Section (1) of the 7th Clause of the Act? I have had some experience as a member of a local education authority, and I know this—that Section 7 of the Act of 1902 is a clause of very great length and of very great difficulty in many ways, and points of law are constantly arising upon it. In reality what we are discussing to-night is, as I have just said, not merely the merits of this case but the point of law. One view has been placed with great authority and great clearness before the House by the noble Lord who addressed the house from the Front Opposition Bench (Lord Ashbourne), and of course his opinion upon a legal question is bound to carry great weight with your Lordships. But, on the other hand, I must remind your Lordships that there is another view, and I must also add that I have a recollection—though I am not able to give chapter and verse—of this point having arisen before, and that, although it may not have been within the intention of Parliament, or of the late Government, when they framed that particular section, the best view of the meaning of this clause was that if the Board of Education is once satisfied upon what is really almost more a question of fact than a question of law—namely, that the education authority, whether in their view rightly or wrongly, has acted upon educational grounds—then the Board of Education, whether it wishes to do so or not, is not able to intervene on the merits of the case. That may or may not be a desirable state of things. That may be a reason for extending the jurisdiction of the Board of Education in appeals of this kind so as to bring it back to what the noble Lord said that in his opinion it was the intention of the late Government to make it. But while the Board of Education, upon adequate legal advice, has come, rightly or wrongly, to the conclusion that as long as it is satisfied that a local authority has acted upon grounds which are educational in their character, and not upon reasons of favour, or of prejudice, or of something involving injustice, they cannot interfere with its decision, then I think it would be exceedingly difficult for your Lordships' House, or the other House of Parliament to intervene in a matter of this kind, and to constitute itself, as it were, upon the whole merits of the case (the story being a very complicated one) a sort of extra Court of Appeal to try and reverse the decision of the Board of Education.

EARL CAWDOR: My Lords, the noble Lord who has just addressed your Lordships has so much authority and experience in regard to local government that I should not venture for a moment to question anything which he puts before your Lordships founded upon that experience. But, as the noble Lord has pointed out, we are really discussing a point of law, and therefore perhaps I may assume that, as neither the noble Lord nor myself am a lawyer, we are equally competent to discuss it from that point of view.

THE EARL OF CREWE: My noble friend is a lawyer.

EARL CAWDOR: Then, the noble Lord being a lawyer, and I not being one, it is clearly not open to me to discuss a point of law against him. All I desire to draw attention to is the very grave importance of the question we are discussing. I do not wish to raise it as a controversial matter so far as Party politics are concerned, but I do put it to the noble Lord the President of the Council that it is a matter of great importance.

The clause we are discussing—Subsection (3) of Clause 7—says—

> "If any questions arise under this section between the local education authority and the managers of a school not provided by the authority, that question shall be determined by the Board of Education."

My Lords, we are told now that the Board of Education hold that in arriving at that determination they are limited in the scope of their inquiry. I think we must press again, as was pressed just now, that we should like to know the legal authority for that limitation which is stated to exist in this clause. I do not express any opinion as to whether it exists or not, but I do press upon your Lordships and upon the noble Earl that this is a matter which should be cleared up. And for this reason. Your Lordships will remember very well that, when the Act of 1902 was before Parliament, it was first of all argued that the managers should have the appointment of teachers in non-provided schools. The objection was then raised, as I remember very well, that if that were so you might be paying teachers who were educationally unfit, and therefore the clause was put in giving the local education authority the right to dissent from the appointment of teachers by the managers, but upon educational grounds alone. No other power was given to the local education authority. That was the safeguard of the ratepayer against inefficient teachers. Then came in the question of a difference of opinion arising between the managers and the education authority, and that contingency was dealt with by Subsection (3) under which it was to be decided by the Board of Education. I do not want to prolong this discussion, but I venture to make an appeal to the noble Lord that he should give us in full the papers and correspondence on this subject, and the reports of inspectors referred to in the course of that correspondence. This is a matter which concerns not only the teacher in whose behalf Lord Dartmouth has pleaded; I think it is essential that we should have the whole story clearly before us, without reservation of any kind, in order that we may know where we stand on the matter; and I hope the noble Earl will not rest satisfied by telling us that some legal authority or other has given his opinion, but that he will take care that the highest possible legal authorities are consulted. The opinion should be taken of the highest law officers of the Crown, and that opinion should be laid before Parliament.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: I can only address your Lordships again by the indulgence of the House, but I will certainly ask my right hon. friend, who I cannot conceive will have any objection, to lay the Papers in this case before the House, bearing always in mind, of course, that the merits of the case have nothing to do with the point which we have been discussing or with the action of the Board of Education.

*The Earl of DARTMOUTH : May I interrupt the noble Earl for one moment? My object is to get these Papers laid on the Table of the House in order that the public may know that the answer of the Minister of Education in another place as to something more being behind which could not be justified has no proper foundation.

*The Earl of CREWE: In the interests of the teacher.

*The Earl of DARTMOUTH: In the interests of the teacher I ask that the whole case should be made public.

*The Earl of CREWE: By all means. As far as I know, the Papers in question are now in the possession of the House of Commons, at least I imagine so, because my right hon. friend said on the 17th April that they would be laid before the House. I will of course also consult my right hon. friend as to the method of once more determining the legal point. He acted upon the legal opinion which was at his disposal, but of course I quite admit that the matter is one of very considerable gravity, and it is very proper that it should be decided by the most competent authorities possible. Perhaps I might be allowed to say that the explanation, to my mind, is an exceedingly simple one why this burden was not thrown upon the Board of Education. It is because, when Acts of Parliament are passed, a Department undoubtedly desires to relieve itself, as far as possible, from the settling of awkward questions, and I am bound to say that the Board of Education would view with very great dismay the prospect of having practically to appoint the teachers in these cases, because that is what it would mean.

*The Earl of DARTMOUTH : You merely appoint the managers.

*The Earl of CREWE : And when I am told (and I was only told by the noble and learned Lord, and not by the noble Marquess who was responsible for the Bill of 1902) that the intention of the Government at that time was that the Board of Education should settle these questions, I take great leave to doubt it.

Lord ASHBOURNE : I beg to correct the noble Earl. I said nothing of the kind. What I said was that in case of an appeal to the Board of Education it was unfair that there should not be a power of veto in that Board. There is a veto with regard to educational grounds.

*The Earl of CREWE : My point was that the Board of Education at that time—by intention, and deliberately—refrained from saying the educational grounds should be "adequate," but, as they believed, left the matter in the position in which it is now. That is the only further point I now wish to make.

*The Earl of DARTMOUTH : It is, of course, understood that I move for the production of the reports of the inspectors, the correspondence, the legal opinion, and any other papers that may be useful to the House.

On Question, Motion agreed to, and ordered accordingly.

INTIMIDATION IN IRELAND.

The Earl of DONOUGHMORE : I am indebted to the noble Lord (Lord Harris) for allowing me to address the House before him. I beg to ask His Majesty's Government the question that stands in my name—namely, whether any regulation carrying out the pledge given by the Lord President of the Council on the 5th June last, that in cases of sale of estates "persons guilty of intimidation shall not obtain any allotment on that estate" will be framed, and when its terms will be published.

*The Earl of CREWE : My Lords, it would have enabled me to save the time of the House if the noble Lord in framing the question which he has placed upon the Paper had quoted the words which I used instead of placing upon the paper the interpretation which he has put upon those words. The words used by me were used on the occasion of the debate of 5th June last, and I had been describing what had happened with regard to the proposed regulation under which estates upon which intimidation was alleged to have taken place should be held up, so to speak, for purposes of sale and purchase, and placed lower down upon the list in order to punish those in the neighbourhood who had been guilty of intimidation. I pointed out that this plan might operate very hardly in some cases—and in fact had so operated—upon landlords and tenants, and I went on to say—

> "If we are to have a remedy of that kind, I think the proper remedy is not to stop the sale of the estate, but to see that persons guilty of intimidation do not obtain any allotment on that estate; and that is the course which I am led to believe is likely to be pursued."

Well, my Lords, that does not amount, if the noble Earl will forgive me for saying so, to a pledge to issue a regulation on that subject. What I had in my mind when I made that statement were observations made in this connection by the Estates Commissioners. Now one of them said, in adjudicating upon a particular case—

> "If the Estates Commissioners find that an applicant for an advance is a notoriously bad character, or a disturber of the peace, or a person who has himself exercised intimidation upon others, they may, in exercise of their discretion decide that he is not a person to whom they should make an advance for the purchase of a "parcel" of land vested in, or acquired by, them, and we have already announced our intention to exercise our discretion in that direction."

Now that is what I had in my mind when I made the observation in question, and I am bound to say that I am not prepared to go further to-day. We do not think it would be reasonable (and I do not think the Estates Commissioners would be willing to undertake the duty) to lay upon the Estates Commissioners an absolute obligation to decline under any circumstances to give any allotment of land to a person who merely in public opinion has been guilty of intimidation.

Now I think we all agree that it would be a most improper thing if the class of persons mentioned by the Commissioner in the observation which I have read were to receive an allotment of land, but I do think that in that matter it is quite possible to trust to the discretion of the Estates Commissioners, because after all a great deal must depend upon the circumstances of the case. I confess that I for one—it is only my own personal opinion—should not be prepared to say that a man who had joined in a mob which had hooted an unpopular grazier, should therefore for all time be debarred from obtaining any allotment of land in the neighbourhood. I think it is conceivable that there might be cases in which much ill-feeling would arise in consequence of what would be really dealing out hard measure because of what had happened in times of excitement, so that it would not be desirable to make an iron rule on the subject. On the other hand I am convinced that the discretion of the Estates Commissioners can be fully trustedto see that in cases where any serious intimidation or guilt of any kind in connection with this matter has been proved against an individual, a black mark should be placed against his name, and I believe that that would act as a most valuable deterrent in a great many cases. I am not at all sorry that the noble Earl has raised this point, because I feel that its being generally known that the Estates Commissioners strongly desire, and are disposed, to take that course, will be of great value in helping to maintain order in these disturbed districts.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: I do not propose to discuss this matter at all, but what I would point out to the noble Earl is this—that the reason my noble friend's question was put down was owing to both my noble friend and myself pressing him in the debate for information as to what instructions the Estates Commissioners had received following the speech to which he himself has alluded, because the noble Lord said that he would make a statement again, we did not press the question. I hope we shall hear from him what instructions were given, because the reason we both raised the question was this—that the noble Earl spoke in no uncertain terms in your Lordship's House as to the course he proposed to take, and with his opinion I most cordially concur, but he must remember that the Chief Secretary had a good many questions put to him upon this subject in another place, and that he fenced——

*THE EARL OF CREWE: May I interrupt the noble Marquess? The Question was put in the other House by a supporter of the boble Marquess in a form which contained a modified allusion to what I had said in this House. Now in the other House they are very strict in matters of order, and the Speaker would not allow the Question in the form in which it was framed, because it was out of order in that it alluded to what I had said here.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: Would the noble Earl tell us whether the Estates Commissioners have any means of obtaining information as to persons guilty of intimidation, and who would, therefore, according to the pronouncement we have heard, be held ineligible for grants of land? Are the Estates Commissioners, for instance, in any sort of relation to the police authorities, and do the police authorities make it their business to communicate with the Estates Commissioners before the latter make allotments of land?

LORD KILLANIN: I understood from what has fallen from the noble Earl that it is the desire of the Government to withhold allotments of land from this class of tenant, and he went on to say that they had announced their intention of doing so. Would he mind informing me and the House where and how they had announced that intention?

*THE EARL OF CREWE: In reply to the noble Marquess, he will see that it is difficult to answer a Question of that kind when one is not in the Department concerned, but I imagine that when a disturbance of this kind has arisen the facts are perfectly well known to the Estates Commissioners, and bearing in mind that they have announced their intention of dealing with such cases in this particular way, no doubt they take steps, through the medium of the constabulary, to find out who the guilty persons are; but I will inquire of my right hon. friend whether any means can be devised of bringing this matter to their notice.

With regard to the Question asked by the noble Lord, Lord Killanin, it was made in the case of an estate in Tipperary.

LORD KILLANIN: When?

*THE EARL OF CREWE: The noble Lord wants the date. It was the 17th January, 1906.

CHINESE IN THE TRANSVAAL.

*LORD HARRIS rose to ask His Majesty's Government "if it is a fact that they have conveyed to the Government of the Transvaal information that they will veto any legislation providing for the retention of any Chinese after March, 1908"; and to call attention to the speech of the Secretary of State for the Colonies on 17th December, 1906.

The noble Lord said that he would not have troubled the House again on this question if it had not been that it appeared to himself and some of his friends absolutely necessary that they should give the Secretary of State an opportunity of giving a distinct contradiction, if he could, to the suspicion that had arisen as to the intention of the Government with regard to the contracts entered into between the employers and Chinese employed in South Africa being respected. The rumours upon which that suspicion was based was to the effect that the Government had advised General Botha's Government that they would veto any legislation providing for the retention in South Africa after March, 1908, of any Chinese employees. That was so diametrically opposed to what they understood the noble Earl to mean when he spoke in December last year in explaining the Letters Patent that he was sure he would be glad, if he could, to give a contradiction to the rumour. He did not think, however, he would be surprised if he found it had aroused considerable suspicion and apprehension. In March, 1908, or at any rate one year after the first meeting of the Transvaal Parliament, the Chinese Ordinance would lapse, and with it all those regulations governing the life of the Chinese in South Africa. Their Lordships would imagine under such circumstances that everything would disappear, but the Government were far too astute for that. They took care to safeguard themselves and left two liabilities, one upon the Transvaal Government of making some arrangements, and the other upon the employers that they should go to the cost of repatriating the Chinese. Therefore, in March, 1908, every liability that ever rested upon the employers under the terms of the Ordinance would remain upon their shoulders, whilst every advantage that they could have got under the

Ordinance would have been swept away. The opportunity of renewal was an immense advantage to them, and there was no doubt that some of the employers and some of the employed would have been glad to renew. In all probability if that great advantage had not been allowed by the late Government—and they naturally thought they had the protection of the law—they would not have entered into the engagement of Chinese at all. It was the advantage of getting experienced and skilled workmen in the second three years that, to a very great extent, induced them to take up the question of the importation of the Chinese. That advantage had been swept away. He knew the noble Earl would reply that the question had been left to the Transvaal Government, and that they could have brought forward an Ordinance providing for renewals; and that he said in December that His Majesty's Government objected to renewals. They naturally, however, had a hope that the Transvaal Government would be able to influence His Majesty's Government and show that they were anxious for renewals. He did not think there had been anything said by General Botha until he left this country that went to show that he objected to renewals. He had several quotations from his speeches. On the 6th December, 1906, he was reported to have said—

> "Het Volk must stand to this point. When the Chinese Ordinance has expired, they must be repatriated."

He went on in subsequent speeches to speak far more encouragingly from the employers' point of view—

> "My Party is firmly resolved to repatriate the Chinese, but that they may be so repatriated that they will not dislocate the mining industry. Further, my Party undertakes to bring enough native labour to supply the mines when they are at the head of affairs. You can be sure that we will not allow one mine to close."

Then the *Daily News* of 13th February headed a communication from General Botha, "Botha's message to the British"—

> "This talk of wholesale Chinese repatriation, regardless of consequences, is nonsense. I say that nothing shall be done to embarrass the mines so far as unskilled labour is concerned. We want to restore confidence in the country. Could we do that by crippling or hampering the mines?"

He could give their Lordships several other quotations, but time was so short, and he must get on. General Botha arrived in this country, and he made several speeches here, as their Lordships knew.

On 28th April General Botha was entertained at a dinner given him by the London representatives of the Transvaal Banking Commercial and Mining Interests. It was a thoroughly representative gathering, including many who could follow General Botha in his own language, and had not to depend on an interpreter. He said—

> "I do not hesitate to say here to-night that my Government will use their best endeavours to make the mining industry a success, and a great success at that, because we know that the prosperity, and the progress, and the welfare, not only of the Transvaal, but of the whole of South Africa are materially dependent upon the development of that industry."

Subsequently he said—

> "In the gold industry there we have large mineral areas which have still to be opened up, and I hope that the people of the Transvaal will put their shoulders together and develop the country."
>
> "The mining industry has undoubtedly supplied the farmer there with a great market, and I only want to give you the assurance that the farming population of the Transvaal are not going to quarrel with their best market."

Subsequently, he received a deputation of managers of mining companies. His reply was not taken down in shorthand, but a summary of it was submitted to him which he approved before publication, and he (the noble Lord) guaranteed that only what he approved was published—

> "He could assure the deputation that he and his Government were entirely in sympathy with the mining industry, and that they would endeavour to increase the supply of natives, and he emphasised the fact that during the elections he had stated that the policy was repatriation and replacement."

He thought it was perfectly clear from those speeches that up to the time of his leaving this country General Botha had given them the greatest encouragement to believe that there would be no serious interruption to the industry. Then in General Botha's last week in England a significant announcement appeared in the Press, viz., that the Government were going to guarantee a loan of £5,000,000 to the Transvaal, and General

Botha's attitude in the recent debates in the Transvaal Parliament, so far as they could judge from the cabled reports, had not been so sympathetic as it was during his visit to this country or as indicated in the speeches previous to his return to power, and, as he (the noble Lord) had said, they had considerable doubts with regard to the question of renewals. They felt that they had been most unjustly treated, and that the loss which would result to the shareholders from the repatriation policy was a most unjust loss to put upon them. It had resulted in a most serious want of confidence. He did not know whether the noble Earl studied the reports of financial matters in the Press, but there was a pretty significant announcement in *The Times* a day or so ago. He observed that the President of the Local Government Board said a few days ago that he was not aware that the Government had in contemplation any legislation which need deter any investor from investing his money in any legitimate enterprise. It was very necessary that some statement of that kind should be made, for in consequence of the statement that the Government meant to guarantee a loan of £5,000,000 to the Transvaal Government very serious doubts had apparently risen in the minds of many investors. The following was the statement which appeared in *The Times* money article a few day's ago—

> "Quotations opened very firm in all departments, owing to Mr. Asquith's statement in the House of Commons yesterday that there would be no issue of a Transvaal guaranteed loan this financial year. This welcome announcement was not generally known yesterday afternoon, but many people had regarded it as likely to be made sooner or later, partly because it was a matter of common knowledge that no such loan could be issued except on terms which would have been regarded as discreditable to the British Government."

That was a wry statement to be made in a financial article in a paper like *The Times*. What did it mean? "Terms discreditable to the British Government!" The construction put upon it in many circles was that the Government found they could not get those terms, as regarded interest, which they ordinarily could get, and that for some reason or other the financial world was not prepared to meet them in this particular loan. He did not know whether the noble Earl studied the papers, but in the *Morning Post* that morning was the following statement—

> "The 387 representative securities quoted monthly by the *Bankers' Magazine* depreciated between May 1st and June 20th by no less than £68,000,000."

That depreciation in the other passage which he had read was attributed to the action the Government had taken as regarded the Transvaal Loan. It was no wonder that investors in South African mines should have the greatest apprehension. Knowing from what the noble Earl said last December that the Government disapproved of renewals, it was not much to be surprised at that they had suspicion that this rumour that the Government were disposed to veto any legislation providing for the three years contracts being respected was possibly true. He was sure the noble Earl would acknowledge that when he spoke last December he said in the most distinct terms that the three years contracts would be respected. If they were not, he confessed he (Lord Harris) had the gravest doubts where the labour was to come from which General Botha and his colleagues promised. The fact was—though he did not wish to be too critical—that the standard of education in economical problems and in the practical management of mines of General Botha and his colleagues with the Boer Government was very elementary even on the subject of the supply of labour. He supposed the noble Earl had noticed a speech made by Mr. Rissik on the subject of the supply of labour from certain parts of South Africa. He was advised by the most competent authority, an official who had reported annually on the subject of labour supply in South Africa, and whose report of last year the noble Earl could get if he wished, that the figures given in Mr. Rissik's speech were absolutely fallacious, the number of Basutos given never existed, and, even if they did, that was not the factor. The factor was what proportion of all the natives who would come up to the Transvaal would be willing to go underground. General Botha, when he was here, said he hoped to make arrangements for the importation of Zulus. If they were willing to work, why in Heaven's name didn't they go and work in Natal on the sugar plantations, where there was employment likely to appeal to their sentiments more than work underground? But they would not go there. The Zulus had never gone underground, and the Basutos had never gone underground. There was only one race which had gone underground, and they were the Poruguese natives. They were therefore under the gravest apprehension that the Boer leaders did not know what they could do in the way of replacement. General Botha first talked about replacement as well as repatriation, but he had receded from that and now said that whilst his Government would do what they could it was the business of the miners to replace. The miners had done their best during the last five years to find natives, and they had found as many as they could, but the question was governed by the fact that they would not go underground. Therefore, their apprehensions were very serious, and they were enforced by the rumour that there was an intention on the part of the Government to interfere with any Transvaal legislation which was necessary for the government of the Chinese after the ordinance had lapsed. He hoped the noble Earl would be able to contradict the rumour.

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: In answer to the direct question of the noble Lord, I have to say that we have made no such communication as he has indicated to the Transvaal Government. We have, of course, the same information as he has, and as the public has, as to the statements which have been made by General Botha in the Transvaal Parliament, but, as regards any communication from ourselves to the effect mentioned in the question, I can assure him that we have made none. I do not think that it would be useful, or indeed that it would be altogether decorous, for me to follow the noble Lord through his criticisms of the speeches of the Prime Minister of the Transvaal in this country, or in his own Parliament. I observe that he said that those speeches during his stay in this country were regarded as up to a point favourable to the Party of the noble Lord, but he gave quotations which he said came from a Report which was approved by General Botha to the effect that what he looked for was an increase of the supply of natives, by which I imagine he meant not Chinese, and that his policy was repatriation and replacement.

LORD HARRIS: Yes.

*LORD ELGIN: If that is a policy which approves itself to the noble Lord, then I do not know that I need quarrel with him on the subject. It seems to me exactly what General Botha has announced himself.

LORD HARRIS: He gave no date for repatriation. Of course, we know that they have got to be repatriated some time.

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: I understood the speech of the noble Lord to go on the footing that the three years contract was the only one of which he spoke and that renewals could be set aside. That is what has been announced by General Botha. As far as I am concerned—the noble Lord has referred to my statement here in December last—I adhere to what I then said. It is now the second alternative which I put in the speech which faces us. In the first alternative, I presupposed that the Transvaal Government might introduce an ordinance early in this year in order to meet the question of shipments which are to take place now. That was not done, and the shipments, as we have been told, are immediately to begin. I was glad to hear it. I went on to say—

> "If, on the contrary, it decides against the continuance of the system, the absence of renewals will greatly facilitate their operation, and also the withdrawal of the coolies."

LORD HARRIS: May I call the noble Earl's attention to another remark which he has not yet read—

> "If it does act, and acts with reasonable promptitude, I do not think any serious questions will arise about renewals."

I did not hear the speech, but I construed it to mean that possibly—you hoped not—but possibly renewals might take place.

*THE EARL OF ELGIN: That is exactly what I was trying to explain. If the

Transvaal Government had chosen to bring forward an ordinance, subject to a condition I am going to mention in a minute, and renewals were to be made, it must have been brought up early in this year in order that the contracts which expired this month should be renewed. That is exactly what I mean. But I say that has passed. It does not exist now; the time has gone. What we have now before us is what I am reading. I went on to say—

> "A gradual process is beyond doubt the one which would be to the advantage of those concerned with the mines with their endeavour to supply a different form of labour."

I wish, in order to make it quite clear, to prevent any misconception, to add that later in the debate I was challenged by Lord Courtney, who said that I seemed to throw it on the unrestricted discretion of the new legislature to frame that new Labour Ordinance. That I denied at once, and, when I replied, I explained the position. I said—

> "I also desire to say, with regard to the new and old ordinance, that I ought perhaps to have brought out that we, of course, entirely adhere to the provisions of the Letters Patent by which any fresh ordinance that was to be drafted by the new Government of the Transvaal would have to come home as a reserved Bill."

That is the position in which we now stand. It is quite true, as the noble Lord has said, that a year from the meeting of the first Transvaal Parliament the whole of the present Ordinance comes to an end. If, therefore, the Transvaal Government desire that the contracts should be carried on under any ordinance and restrictions, they must present it to their own Parliament in the form of a Bill, and that Bill must be reserved and come home to us for our decision. I think the House will agree with me that it would have been, and is now, most improper for me, or for the Government, to express, in advance, the action which we might have to take with regard to a Bill which would be solemnly reserved for us under the provisions of the Letters Patent. We have not done so, and that is the state of matters so far as we are concerned.

[House adjourned at half-past Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 27th June, 1907.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Great Yarmouth Port and Haven Bill; Taff Vale Railway Bill.—Lords Amendments considered, and agreed to.

Central London Railway Bill.—Read the third time, and passed.

Southend Water Bill [Lords].—As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time.

Ladybank Sewerage Drainage and Water Provisional Order Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11) Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 14) Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time To-morrow.

Canal Tolls and Charges (New Junction Canal) Order Confirmation Bill [Lords].—Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Order confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time To-morrow.

Kendal Corporation Bill [Lords]; Heywood and Middleton Water Board Bill [Lords]; Wisbech Water Bill [Lords]; Burnham (Somerset) Pier Bill [Lords].—Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

General Accident, Fire, and Life Assurance Corporation, Limited [Lords].—Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time.

Ocean Accident and Guarantee Corporation [Lords].—Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP J).

Major SEELY reported from the Committee on Group J. of Private Bills; That Mr. Duffy, one of the Members of the Committee, was not present during the sitting of the Committee this day.

Report to lie upon the Table.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP J).

Major SEELY reported from the Committee on Group J. of Private Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned until Monday next, at half-past Eleven o'clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 13) Bill.—Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill, as amended, to be considered To-morrow.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP G.)

Sir HENRY KIMBER reported from the Committee on Group G. of Private Bills; That Mr. Fullerton, one of the Members of the said Committee, was not present during the sitting of the Committee this day.

Report to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to:—Amendments to—Sutton Coldfield Rectory Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer further powers on the Colne Valley Water Company for the raising of capital; and for other purposes." [Colne Valley Water Bill [Lords.]]

Colne Valley Water Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION (SPECIAL RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION BILL).

Two Petitions from Newton-in-Makerfield, against; to lie upon the Table.

PAUPER LUNATICS (COST OF MAINTENANCE).

Petitions for legislation: From Alston with Garrigill; and, Isle of Wight; to lie upon the Table.

SMALL LANDHOLDERS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Inverness, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

WEEKLY REST-DAY BILL.

Petition from London, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

MERCHANT SHIPPING (TONNAGE DEDUCTION FOR PROPELLING POWER) BILL.

Petition from the Dublin Port and Docks Board, against alterations, praying to be heard by counsel; referred to the Select Committee on the Bill.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACTS, 1882 TO 1902 (PROCEEDINGS).

Copy presented, of Report by the Board of Trade respecting the Applications to and Proceedings of the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 to 1902, during the past year [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 223.]

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT.

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 17th June; *Mr. Lloyd Morgan*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 224.]

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3842 and 3843 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

COLONIAL REPORTS (ANNUAL).

Copy presented, of Report No. 526 (St. Helena, Annual Report for 1906) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Lunacy. Copy of Sixty-first Report of the Commissioners in Lunacy to the Lord Chancellor [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 225.]

PROSECUTION OF OFFENCES ACTS, 1879 AND 1884.

Address for "Return showing the working of the regulations made in 1886 for carrying out the Prosecution of Offences Acts, 1879 and 1884, with statistics setting forth the number, nature, result, and cost of the proceedings instituted by the director in accordance with those regulations, from the 1st day of January 1906, to the 31st day of December, 1906 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 183, of Session 1906)."—(*Mr. Herbert Samuel.*)

COMPANY LAWS IN THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

Copy presented: of Comparative Analysis of the Company Laws of the United Kingdom, India, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, with a Memorandum prepared for the Imperial Conference, 1907, by direction of the Board of Trade [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Kennington Park Telegraph Office.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General why telegrams addressed to residents in Kennington Park, S.E., are no longer receivable at the Kennington Park post office, thereby necessitating wires addressed to inhabitants in this district being received at a distant post office and transmitted by messenger to Kennington Park, with the result that considerable delay is involved; and whether the telegraphic facilities in question, which were formerly enjoyed by business houses in this neighbourhood, can be again afforded.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I am inquiring into the Question.

Women on Scottish County Councils.

MR. GULLAND (Dumfries Burgh): To ask the Secretary for Scotland how many towns councils and how many county councils there are in Scotland; what is the total electorate for these bodies; and how many of the electors are women.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) The latest information that is available on this subject is contained in a Return (No.269) to an order of the House of Lords dated 7th July, 1890.

Women on Scottish Library Committees.

MR. GULLAND: To ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state the total number of public library committees in Scotland, the number on which women are members, the total membership of library committees, and the number that are women, distinguishing between those that are members of the elected bodies and those that are co-opted.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) The information required by my hon. friend is not available; and, although I recognise the interest that such information would possess, I do not consider the collection of the statistics would justify the amount of labour that would be entailed.

Women on Scottish School Boards.

MR. GULLAND: To ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state the total number of school boards in Scotland; the number on which women are members; the total number of school board members; and the number that are women.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) There are 972 school boards in Scotland with a total membership of 5,680. At the elections which took place last year, women representatives were returned to serve on sixty-three boards, the total number of women elected being seventy-six.

Women on Scottish Parish Councils.

Mr. GULLAND: To ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state the total number of parish councils in Scotland; the number on which women are members; the total number of parish councillors; and the number that are women.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair*) The total number of parish councils in Scotland is 874, the number on which women are members is twenty-two, the total number of parish councillors is 7,920, and the number of women parish councillors is 37. There may have been one or two changes in the above figures since the election in 1904, but they may be taken as substantially correct at the present time.

Irish Land Judge's Court.

Mr. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state for how many estates in the Land Judge's Court for sale have the Estates Commissioners made purchase proposals, the name of each such estate, the county in which it is situate, and the date of the proposal; and whether, seeing that the Estates Commissioners and their inspectors possess special competence for estimating the value of land, and in view of the cost of the Land Court and the hardships inflicted upon large numbers of people by the delay in its proceedings, he will give favourable consideration to the desirability of transferring to the Estates Commissioners all estates for sale.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners have issued proposals for the purchase of seventy-six estates in the Land Judge's Court. In the case of sixty-one estates the Land Judge has accepted, or indicated his willingness to accept, the Commissioners' offer, in three cases the Commissioners' offer has been refused, in one case their offer has been withdrawn at the request of the Land Judge, and in the remaining eleven cases the offers are still pending. These facts do not appear to indicate the desirability of considering the suggestion made in the latter part of the Question.

Merchandise Marks.

Mr. JOWETT (Bradford, W.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Australian Commonwealth has withdrawn or modified the regulations made under the Commerce Act (Trade Descriptions) of 1905, relating to the composition, weight, quantity, and place of origin, of goods imported into Australia, so far as the same applies to textile exported from this country; and, if the said regulations have not been withdrawn, will he say what are the requirements of the Australian Government so far as they apply to the importation of textiles.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) The Board of Trade are informed that the regulations in question are still in force. In reply, however, to inquiries made by various chambers of commerce in the United Kingdom the Commonwealth Government have given a decision to the following effect:—"Piece goods suitings and vestings are not included under the regulations. Piece goods are not articles of apparel. If the terms number and yards are marked on the goods which have not been made in an English-speaking country the country of origin must be stated in conjunction with such marking. It will not be necessary to state whether the length is net or gross. All that is required is that if any length is stated it shall be correct. It is not necessary to state the composition of piece goods. If exporters to Australia do not wish to label their piece goods at all they need not do so." This decision was published in the Board of Trade *Journal* for 14th March.

Vacancies in the Post Office.

Mr. WILES (Islington, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether his Department during 1905 or any subsequent period experienced difficulty in obtaining enough ex-soldiers to fill the vacancies in the postal service open to them.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) During 1905 difficulty was occasionally experienced in some districts in filling postal appointments due to ex-soldiers; but the cases of difficulty have been comparatively few.

Electricity Meters.

CAPTAIN FABER (Hampshire, Andover): To ask the President of the Local Government Board what facilities are obtainable by the general public for procuring an official test of electricity meters by any official of the Board of Trade, on payment of any prescribed fee; and whether electric meters, issued by the makers, are tested by any official before issue to the public.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) My right hon. friend has asked me to reply to this Question. The Board of Trade have no power to undertake the test of consumers' electricity meters. Consumers may require their meters to be tested, on payment of a prescribed fee, by an electric inspector, who may be appointed, as regards undertakings in London, by the county council, and, as regards undertakings outside London, by the Board of Trade, on formal application being made to them where the undertakers are a local authority, and by the local authority where the undertakers are a company.

Missing Camel Corps.

MR. KETTLE (Tyrone, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is now in a position to give information as to certain casualties reported to have been sustained by No. 2 Company, Camel Corps, which left for Bir Natron, under Bimbashi Whittingham, in February last.

(*Answered by Secretary Sir Edward Grey.*) The garrison of Bir Natron evacuated that post on 10th or 15th April, intending to proceed to Abu Tabari, where they expected to meet the convoy of supplies which had left Debba on 12th March. The party consisted of one officer, forty men, eight women, one child, thirty-eight camels, and a guide. On the fourth day of their march, having failed to reach Abu Tabari, the guide confessed that he had lost his way, and advised that scouts should be sent out. Two parties were accordingly despatched, of which one found the convoy above referred to, from which they obtained water for their party, and retraced their steps. On regaining their party they found only eleven men, seven women, and a boy; the officer, nineteen men, one woman and two Arabs having, for some reason which cannot be ascertained, gone southwards with all the camels. A search party was sent out to find them, but a dust storm frustrated their efforts, and the remainder of the party, with the help of the convoy, moved into Abu Tabari. From there information as to the incident was sent to Khandak, and search parties were at once sent out, with the result that the second scouting party were discovered alive; but although every effort was made no trace could be found of the officer's party which had started south, with the exception of one body. It is, therefore, to be feared that the officer, Mulazim Awal Ali Effendi Hassan, and the twenty-two persons with him have lost their lives. All the survivers are well and have arrived at El Bab, in Wadi el Kab.

Irish Taxation.

MR. KETTLE: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he can state the amount of Ireland's contribution to tax revenue for each year from 1897 to 1907; what proportion did the contribution of Ireland bear to that of Great Britain; and, if the contribution of Ireland had been based on the unanimous finding of the Financial Relations Commission, 1894–6 (*i.e.*, limited to one-twentieth of the tax revenue raised in Great Britain), what would have been the amounts for the years in question.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*)—

Year.	Tax Revenue contributed by Ireland.	Proportion of Ireland's Tax Revenue to that of Great Britain.	One-twentieth of Tax Revenue contributed by Great Britain.
	£	Per cent.	£
1897–8 - -	7,144,000	7·9	4,517,900
1898–9 - -	7,197,000	7·8	4,617,900
1899–1900 - -	7,619,000	7·6	5,016,950
1900–1 - -	8,453,000	7·6	5,530,150
1901–2 - -	8,712,000	7·2	6,074,350
1902–3 - -	9,097,000	7·1	6,381,550
1903–4 - -	8,622,000	7·3	5,875,350
1904–5 - -	8,601,000	7·2	5,979,950
1905–6 - -	8,254,000	7·0	5,925,850
1906–7 - -	8,274,000	6·9	5,987,050

It should be pointed out, however, that if Ireland's tax revenue had been reduced to the amounts shown in the last column the total revenue derived from Ireland would in most years have been insufficient to cover the cost of Irish services. The result would have been, therefore, that on the whole period Ireland would have contributed nothing to Imperial expenditure, to the service of the National Debt, or of the Army and Navy, while the taxpayers of Great Britain would have had to contribute about £5,000,000 to Irish local expenditure.

King's County Council Appointment.

VISCOUNT TURNOUR (Sussex, Horsham): To ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland) whether he is aware that the King's County Council, at a special meeting held at Tullamore on 19th June, appointed as inspector under the Sheep Dipping Orders a man named Horan, on the ground that he belonged to the United Irish League, although Mr. Colclough, who held the appointment during the previous year, was reported by the secretary as having been most efficient; and whether he will give directions that such appointments are not to be filled up on the grounds of political expediency, but for reasons of technical ability to fill them.

(*Answered by Mr. T. W. Russell.*) The Department have no official information as to the grounds of selection in this instance. In the case of temporary appointments of this kind it is not the practice to interfere with the discretion of the appointing authority.

Irish Primary Education.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the public meetings which have been and are being held all over Ireland on primary education; and whether, in view of the fact that all sections of the Irish people, irrespective of politics, have passed unanimous resolutions at these meetings in favour of much-needed reforms in the system of primary education, he can state when the subject will be dealt with; and, if not, will he explain the reasons for ignoring this question in which the whole country is united.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I am aware that many meetings in reference to this subject have been held, and that there is a strong feeling in favour of giving better salaries and pensions to the teachers. The Irish Government have no intention of ignoring the question; but, having regard to the large amount of money involved, it is not possible to deal with it at present.

Inchitolone Moonlighting Outrage.

MR. HICKS BEACH (Gloucester, Tewkesbury): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a police report from the constabulary of Kanturk district concerning a moonlighting outrage against the person of John Curtin, of Inchitolone, near Newmarket; whether a party of men, armed and disguised, decoyed this man into the open, seized him, discharged their guns at him, and ordered him to surrender his farm; whether the farm has been surrendered; and whether any arrests have been made in connection with this incident.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I have received a police report about this case. Thomas Curtin, the person referred to in the Question, is a labourer who occupies a dilapidated house while a labourer's cottage is being built for him. He has no farm. Curtin has informed the police that three disguised men visited his house, fired revolver shots in the air, and asked him to surrender the house. No arrests have been made, because Curtin states that he does not know the offenders, and no other evidence is forthcoming.

Complaint against Belfast Policeman.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a complaint in writing was lodged by Mr. Stouppe M'Cance, a magistrate for the county of Antrim, on 28th March last, with regard to the alleged ill-treatment by a constable of the Belfast police force of a woman whom he was taking to the police station, of which Mr. M'Cance was a witness; whether Mr. M'Cance asked for an inquiry into the constable's conduct; whether an inquiry was subsequently held without Mr. M'Cance being present; whether the constable was, in the absence of Mr. M'Cance's evidence, acquitted of blame; and whether, in view of the importance of the public being assured that any reasonable charge against the conduct of a constable will be impartially inquired into, he will order an official inquiry to be held as to the matter in question.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) It is the fact that Mr. M'Cance made a written complaint to the effect stated in the Question. No formal inquiry was held, but the Commissioner of Police obtained written statements from four persons who witnessed the woman's arrest, and these statements showed that the woman was very drunk and threw herself on the ground. All the statements, including Mr. M'Cance's written complaint, were placed before legal advisers of the Government, who decided that the case was not one in which any action should be taken.

Tonlagee Police.

MR. BECKETT (Yorkshire, N.R., Whitby): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a resotion passed on 16th June, by the Kilbride branch of the United Irish League, to the effect that a certain house in Tonlagee is open at all times for the refreshment and recreation of the police, and that, considering the brutal acts perpetrated recently by these hirelings of Dublin Castle, the people of Tonlagee are called upon to treat the owners of such houses as blacklegs and to hold no communication with them in the future; and whether, in view of the character of this resolution, he will take steps to prevent the boycotting of the individual referred to and of the police in the execution of their public duty.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I am informed that a resolution to the effect stated in the Question has appeared in a local newspaper. The meeting at which the resolution purports to have been passed was held within doors, and the police have no knowledge that it was passed. The person referred to in the resolution is not boycotted and needs no assistance from the police. If necessity should arise the police will afford full protection.

Roscomroe Prosecution.

MR. LEVERTON HARRIS (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, after four appearances before the local magistrates, the sixteen defendants charged with unlawful assembly and cattle-driving at Roscomroe on 30th April were dismissed on Monday last; whether any and, if so, what defence was offered; and what steps will now be taken to bring the perpetrators of this act to justice.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The fact is as stated in the Question. The evidence in the case is about to be submitted to my right hon. friend the Attorney-General for Ireland, who will consider whether further proceedings should be taken.

Kilcreggan War Office Purchase.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, College): To ask the Secretary of State for War what were the dates on which the two valuations were made of the land at Kilcreggan purchased from the Duke of Argyll; whether they differ materially; if so, by how much; and if he will say what circumstances justified the payment of the price of £14,500 for a property of £60 annual valuation.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The valuations were made on 21st March and 4th July, 1901. The difference between them was material; but I have already told my hon. friend that the amounts could not be disclosed. My hon. friend is doubtless aware of the heavy cost of arbitration proceedings, and he will therefore understand that it is far cheaper for the War Department to make the arrangement in question than to proceed to arbitration.

Visit of the Prince of Wales to Edinburgh.

MR. C. E. PRICE (Edinburgh, Central): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will state what arrangements are to be made for giving their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales a cavalry escort during their stay in the capital of Scotland.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Scottish Command, has made arrangements for a cavalry escort for their Royal Highnesses.

Piershill Barracks.

MR. C. E. PRICE: To ask the Secretary of State for War what are the dates upon which the first report was made as to the sanitary condition of Piershill Barracks, and the report of the medical officer of health and the chief sanitary inspector for the city of Edinburgh; whether, subsequent to the latter report, another inquiry was made by the War Office; and, if so, has such inquiry been concluded, a report issued, and when.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The first report on the sanitary condition of Piershill Barracks was made by the sanitary engineer of the War Office and the sanitary expert of the Army Medical Advisory Board in April, 1906. A second report was made by the Director-General, Army Medical Service, in May. 1906. A conjoint inspection was made by the sanitary engineer of the War Office and the sanitary expert of the Army Medical Advisory Board on the one hand, and the medical officer of health for the borough of Edinburgh and the chief sanitary inspector, Dr. Williamson, on the other, in December, 1906, and a third report submitted by the two first-named officials. The report of the Director-General, Army Medical Service, and the report dated December, 1906, by the sanitary engineer of the War Office and the sanitary expert of the Army Medical Advisory Board, were laid before Parliament in 1906 [Cd. 2996]. There has been no subsequent inquiry later than that mentioned, viz., December, 1906.

Undress Clothing for Soldiers.

MR. COWAN (Surrey, Guildford): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will consider the advisability of an alteration in the King's Regulations whereby soldiers may be permitted to visit the towns adjacent to their camps in an undress uniform.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) There is no order of dress now known as "undress," its place being taken by a kharkee suit for field work and active service; this dress is not suitable for walking out. The uniform, the tunic and forage cap, now worn by the soldier when off duty outside the limits of camp is comfortable and smart, and there is no intention or necessity of making any change in existing orders.

Army Contracts.

MR. COWAN: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, considering the effect upon many traders of the present system of contracting for Army food supplies without public advertisement in the usual trade and other papers, he will take steps to ensure that in future such contracts shall be fully advertised, and that each separate trade shall be permitted to tender for such goods as its members are able to supply.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The periodical contracts for Army rations and supplies are advertised in trade and other papers. If, however, the Question refers to canteen contracts, it must be pointed out that these are under regimental control, and the Army Council does not propose to interfere with the arrangements made by the regiments.

Military Canteens.

MR. COWAN: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether military canteens and messes are permitted to remain open on Sundays during hours at which ordinary licensed houses are obliged to close; whether grocery bars in military camps are also permitted to open on Sundays; and, if so, whether he will take measures to oblige the contractors for, and managers of, such canteens, messes, and bars to conform to the usual civil law or custom in such matters.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The regimental mess is the sergeant's home, and it is not practicable to make rules as to the hours at which meals or refreshments are to be taken by non-commissioned officers coming off duty at various times. As regards canteens, the following is the rule in the King's Regulations, paragraph 1003:—"Generals Commanding will decide the hours during which the liquor bar may be kept open, but in no case is it to be kept open during the hours of Divine Service on Sundays. Other branches of the institute (which includes grocery bars) will be kept open during such hours as the commanding officer may determine." It is not proposed to make any change in these regulations.

Ailsa Craig.

MR. J. D. WHITE (Dumbartonshire): To ask the President of the Board of Trade what was the price paid for that portion of Ailsa Craig which now belongs to the Commissioners of Northern Lights; when and from whom that portion was purchased, and whether it was purchased under compulsory powers; whether the Commissioners have the right of quarrying for stone for commercial purposes on that portion; whether on that portion such quarrying is commercially practicable; and what are approximately the areas of that portion and of the rest of the island.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) The price paid for the portion of Ailsa Craig acquired by the Northern Lights Commissioners was £1,550. It was purchased under compulsory powers from the Marquess of Ailsa in 1883. The question of the Commissioners' right to quarry for stone has not been raised, but I am informed that such quarrying is not commercially practicable. The total area of the Commissioners' portion of the island is 4 acres, 3 roods, 21½ poles, with certain water rights and wayleaves, and the total area of the island is believed to be between 200 and 250 acres.

Bass Rock.

MR. J. D. WHITE: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what was the price paid for that portion of the Bass Rock which now belongs to the Commissioners of Northern Lights; when and from whom that portion was purchased, and whether it was purchased under compulsory powers; and what are approximately the areas of that portion and of the rest of the rock.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) The portion of this island occupied by the Northern Lights Commissioners, which is rather less than three-quarters of an acre, with certain water rights and wayleaves, is held on feu, the annual feu duty being £40. It was acquired in 1900 by agreement from Sir Walter Dalrymple. I do not know the exact area of the rest of the island; but it is, I understand, about three-quarters of a mile in circumference.

Hyskeir Rock.

MR. J. D. WHITE: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can state whether Hyskeir Rock, on which a lighthouse has been erected recently by the Commissioners of Northern Lights, belonged to or had to be purchased from any private person; and, if so, when and from whom was it purchased; what was the price paid; and whether the purchase was effected under compulsory powers.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) Hyskeir Island was acquired by the Northern Lights Commissioners under compulsory powers from Mr. Robert Thom in April, 1902, the total sum paid to him (in November, 1903) being £611 3s. 3d.

Doncaster Land Tax Commissioners.

MR. C. NICHOLSON (Yorks, W.R., Doncaster): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if any meetings of Land Tax Commissioners have been held in the Doncaster division during the present year; if so, on what date such meetings were held; whether all duly appointed Commissioners were summoned to them; and, if not, will he state why certain Commissioners were summoned and other Commissioners were not.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) The clerk to the Commissioners for Doncaster borough has replied to an inquiry that the duties of Land Tax Commissioners in his division are in general so trifling that it was not considered necessary to hold separate meetings for the transaction of land tax and income tax business, and that it had not been thought worth while to put gentlemen who are not also Income Tax Commissioners to the trouble of attending meetings at which their presence is required only for a very limited time, and for the transaction of business of a purely formal character. His action is not in conformity with the requirements of The Land Tax Commissioners Act, 1906, and I have directed that this should be pointed out to him.

Boy Messengers in the Post Office.

MR. SNOWDEN (Blackburn): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he is aware of the measures taken by the Postmaster-General to retain boy messengers in the service of the Post Office; and whether, seeing that the reasons against discharging boy messengers at the age of eighteen apply with greater force to the case of boy clerks discharged through no fault of their own at the age of twenty, he will take immediate action to improve the position of boy clerks, about 600 of whom are discharged annually owing to the lack of permanent posts available.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) The position of boy clerks in the Civil Service is at present under consideration; and I am not able to make any statement as to the conclusion which will be arrived at.

Inland Revenue Department and Public Holiday.

MR. SNOWDEN: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he is aware that the Board of Inland Revenue has issued an order to the out-door staff declaring Friday the 28th instant to be a public holiday throughout the Department, that, notwithstanding, the out-door officers are required to perform their usual duties on that day; and will he consider the practicability of granting to such officers an additional day's leave at some other convenient time.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) As a general rule out-door officers are not required to perform duties on official holidays. But, when an official holiday is not also a general public holiday, excise officers are required to give such attendance as may be necessary to prevent interruption of business in warehouses and distilleries. It has not been the practice to give to the officers so attending an additional day's leave at some other time, and, in view of the general conditions of the out-door service, it does not seem that such concession is called for.

Rosyth.

MR. J. D. WHITE: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what is the area of the property at Rosyth purchased by the Admiralty some years ago; when and from whom it was purchased; what was the total price paid; and whether the purchase was effected under compulsory powers.

(*Answered by Mr. Lambert.*) The property purchased at Rosyth consists of 1,184 acres of land and 286 acres of foreshore. It was acquired in the years 1903–4 in three purchases from (1) Lord Linlithgow; (2) Mr. Newton; and (3) the Minister of Inverkeithing and Mr. Newton. The total price paid was £139,550. The Answer to the last part of the Question is in the negative.

Perth Postman's Accident.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that an auxiliary postman met with an accident at Perth station on the 15th instant, and that he was kept in the mail porters' office for over an hour before being taken to the hospital, owing to the fact that an ambulance could not be got and no one would take the responsibility of incurring an expense for cab fare; and whether he will issue instructions to see that such delay in cases of accident does not occur.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I find that an auxiliary postman met with an accident to his foot at Perth station on the 15th instant, and I am informed that he was assisted to the mail porter's room where first aid was rendered by a member of the railway ambulance corps. I regret to learn that some little delay occurred in getting the postman home. Instructions have been issued on the subject.

Athenry Postman's Grievance.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that a postman at Athenry requiring special leave procured a duly authorised substitute, that the substitute left three parcels undelivered through an error, that the postmaster of Athenry refused to allow the substitute to rectify his mistake, sent specially for the postman and made him deliver the parcels without pay, at the same time telling him that he was entirely responsible for any mistakes made by his substitute; and will he say whether a man is liable to punishment in the Post Office for mistakes committed by substitutes who have been passed as efficient by supervisors.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I am making inquiry and will communicate with the hon. Member.

Galway Veterinary Inspector.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): To ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland) whether, in view of the proposed increase in the temporary staff of the Veterinary Branch, he can state on how many days during the last six months the Department's veterinary inspector at Galway had no duty to discharge; and will he say what course he proposes to take with reference to this sinecure appointment.

(*Answered by Mr. T. W. Russell.*) Owing to the very satisfactory decline in the prevalence of animal contagious diseases in the county Galway district during the present year, there were approximately seventy days during which the Department's veterinary inspector stationed at Galway was not dealing with reported outbreaks. But on these days, as on other days, he was on duty in readiness to deal with such outbreaks as might arise. The presence of an inspector at Galway continues necessary, notwithstanding the partial decline of contagious animal disease. For some time to come he will have additional duties in connection with the Sheep Dipping Order of 1907.

Lord Chancellor's Salary.

MR. HERBERT (Buckinghamshire, Wycombe): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will see to it that the next time the Estimates are prepared in such a form that a portion of the Lord Chancellor's salary proportionate to the relative importance of his duties as Chairman of the House of Lords and of his other duties is set down under separate heads.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The Acts 14 and 15 Vic., c. 83, and 15 and 16 Vic., c. 87, fix his Lordship's salary from the Consolidated Fund at £10,000, less whatever sum may be assigned to him by the House of Lords as Speaker. Any remuneration which might be given him from Votes in respect of other functions would therefore, assuming him not to be debarred by law from receiving it, have the effect of increasing *pro tanto* his total emoluments. I do not see my way to proposing any alteration of the present arrangement, which is of long standing and could not be changed without legislation.

Income Tax on Loans.

MR. VIVIAN (Birkenhead): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if loans from banks negotiated through brokers, when the borrower's name is not disclosed to the bank but identified by a number, will be treated as loans made with a bank on which income tax can be repaid to the borrower, the custom with some banks being not to accept the borrower's name from the broker; will these be eligible for reclaim directly by the borrower, or must the broker reclaim and allow the borrower; is it to be understood that the Exchequer does not claim double income tax under any circumstances where interest is paid out of taxed interest, when such payments can be identified; and will returns for reduced 9d. income tax under the new Act have to give in detail every item of taxed interest paid and received, or will totals be accepted from persons in financial business.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The practice referred to in the first part of the Question is one which has so far not come under the notice of the Board of Inland Revenue, and they would prefer to have a concrete case before them before they offer an opinion as to the course that should be pursued in such circumstances. The Board of Inland Revenue endeavour, so far as they can, to avoid double assessments on the same income. But it must be remembered that relief in respect of tax on payments of interest is confined to payments of annual interest. Full particulars of all interest paid and received are now required in the case of persons claiming exemption or abatement under the existing law, and presumably the same course will have to be followed in the case of the new relief to be granted to earned incomes.

Punjab Land Revenue.

MR. C. J. O'DONNELL (Newington, Walworth): To ask the Secretary of State for India if he will state, for each district in the Punjab, the amount of land revenue assessed on it in 1855 and at each new settlement since that year, noting the districts that have been added to or taken from the Punjab Province since 1855.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) I am in communication with the Government of India regarding the preparation of a return of the land revenue assessments of the districts of the Punjab from 1855 to date, which will give the information desired by the hon. Member. I propose to lay it upon the Table.

Indian Military Pension.

SIR SEYMOUR KING (Hull, Central): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he can now state when the actuarial report and valuation for the sixth quinquennial period under the Indian Military Service Family Pension Fund Regulations will be published.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) The valuation and actuarial reports, with modifications in the rates of contributions under Indian Military Service Family Pension Regulations, will very shortly be sent to the Government of India with a view to their publication in the Gazette of India.

Indian Factory Committee.

SIR SEYMOUR KING: To ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Report of the Factory Committee has been received from the Government of India; whether its recommendations will involve any legislation; and whether it is intended to appoint a Commission of Inquiry, on which the commercial interests affected will be represented, to consider the Report before any action is determined on.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) The Report has been received, and is being printed for presentation to Parliament. In the Resolution appointing the Committee the Government of India stated that the inquiry would be a preliminary one, and that, if it showed the existence of abuses, a representative Commission would be appointed to consider the whole subject comprehensively before any radical changes in the present factory law were made.

Irish Pupil Teachers.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many applications have been received by the Commissioners of National Education for the position of pupil teacher or monitor from candidates who have passed, and how many passed with honours the junior or middle grade of the Intermediate Board; and how many applications have been received from candidates who intend to present themselves at this year's examinations of the Intermediate Board.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Commissioners of National Education have received applications for the position of pupil teacher from 150 candidates, of whom twenty-six claim to have passed with honours at intermediate examinations, and the remainder have notified their intention of attending this year's examinations. The Commissioners have not yet received from their inspectors the returns of the applications for monitorships.

Untenanted Lands in Limerick.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say whether the Estates Commissioners intend to give some untenanted land, that will be available in the county of Limerick, to Thomas Bridgeman, of Cunigar, Askeaton, nephew of Partick Noonan, deceased, evicted tenant, having regard to the fact that Noonan bequeathed to him Lot 13 on the Mount Shannon estate, which the inspector of the Commissioners said he was to get.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) If Thomas Bridgeman should make an application to the Estates Commissioners for a parcel of land, the Commissioners will duly consider the application, with others, when they are distributing untenanted land in county Limerick.

Rathregan Estate, Westmeath.

MR. SHEEHY (Meath, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the sale of the Rathregan estate, Westmeath, has been sanctioned by the Estates Commissioners; whether the Commissioners were aware that William Allen, a tenant on the property, sold a portion of his farm to Messrs. Wallace, of Dublin; whether the said farm is 500 acres in extent; and whether the Commissioners, having regard to the decision in the Ward case, are prepared to advance public money for the purchase of Allen's divided farm.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners are unable to identify the estate referred to in the Question unless the name of the owner is furnished.

Under Age Recruits.

MR. PATRICK WHITE (Meath, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that James M'Connon, aged seventeen years and five months, enlisted in the Royal Irish Fusiliers without his parents' consent; and whether, having regard to the fact that his father, Mr. T. M'Connon, of Slane, county Meath, has claimed his discharge from the Army and that the boy is anxious to be released, he will order his discharge.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) These matters are dealt with by the local military authorities in accordance with the King's Regulations, and the Army Council does not interfere with their discretion.

Volunteer Sergeant Instructors at Hulme Barracks, Manchester.

MR. CLYNES (Manchester, N.E.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether his Department has issued documents requesting sergeant instructors to Volunteers to go into the vacant married quarters at Hulme Barracks, Manchester, instead of drawing the usual allowance and residing in private places; whether he has considered the disapproval of the instructors and the loss and inconvenience entailed to their families; and whether he can refrain from enforcing such an order or announce that it will not be made compulsory.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) There are twenty-seven married soldiers' quarters available in Hulme Barracks, and there are forty families on the lodging list in Manchester. The G.O.C.'s attention has been drawn to the matter with a view to avoiding unnecessary expenditure of public funds. The whole question is still under consideration.

German Old-age Pensions.

SIR JOHN TUKE (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): To ask the Prime Minister if he will cause to be prepared and laid upon the Table as a Parliamentary Paper a memoranudm giving full particulars of the system in operation in the German Empire in regard to old-age pensions.

(*Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*) The main features of the German old-age pension system will be found fully described in the Board of Trade Paper, C. 9414, of 1899 (Provision for old age by Government action in certain European countries). The issue of a further memorandum on the subject would therefore, I think, be superfluous, as, although there have been some modifications in the German law since the Paper was issued in 1899, they do not affect its main principles.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Estimates for Naval Ammunition.

SIR BERKELEY SHEFFIELD (Lincolnshire, Brigg): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, the total amount provided in the Navy Estimates for 1901–2 and 1907–8, respectively, for projectiles, ammunition, torpedoes, and gun cotton.

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. LAMBERT, Devonshire, South Molton): The amounts provided for the above stores in the years specified were as follows:—1901–2, £2,696,000; 1907–8, £1,282,000. I may add that in 1901–2 the Reserves were being largely increased, and a more expensive type of armour-piercing shell was introduced. The Reserves are now complete.

German Naval Reserves.

SIR BERKELEY SHEFFIELD: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, in view of the fact that the German navy estimates only contain information as to the permanent force, numbering 46,936, whether the Admiralty can give any approximate estimate of the size of the German naval reserves?

MR. LAMBERT: I am not in a position to give the desired information, as the figures of the German naval reserve are not published.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): Cannot the hon. Gentleman give an approximate estimate of the German naval reserve? Have not the Admiralty that information?

MR. LAMBERT: I must decline to answer any Question as to the nature of information possessed by the Admiralty.

Sirocco Works, Belfast.

MR. HUDSON (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, if he is aware that the firm of Davidson and Company, Limited, Sirocco Works, Belfast, in addition to refusing a number of their workmen the right to combine in legal organisation, employ labourers in their fan department at wages ranging from 15s. to 25s. per week upon boilermakers' work, in the stove-fitting department to do fitters' work at wages from 25s. to 27s. per week, and a number of this class of workmen are doing the work of sheet-metal workers at wages varying from 17s. to 25s. per week; whether the name of this firm remains on the Admiralty list as a contractor to His Majesty's Government; and, if so, what steps he proposes to take, if any, to see that the Fair Wages Resolution of the House is observed.

MR. LAMBERT: The Admiralty have no information on the points mentioned in the Question, and could only intervene in case of a breach of the Fair Wages

Resolution in the execution of an Admiralty contract. If the hon. Member brings any such breach to my notice, inquiry will at once be instituted.

*MR. LEIF JONES (Westmoreland, Appleby): Are we to understand that it is only if a contractor violates the clause in respect of a particular Government contract that the Admiralty can interfere; that no regard is paid to the general rate of wages paid by the firm?

MR. LAMBERT: I can only say if the hon. Member has any facts to bring to my notice they will be considered.

Lord Rayleigh's Cordite Committee.

MR. BELLAIRS: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what was the date of the first sitting of Lord Rayleigh's Cordite Committee; and what proportion of the estimated £200,000 to be spent this year on refrigerating machinery for the magazines is for the ships already built, which have been officially stated to number fifty-one battleships, twenty-eight armoured cruisers, and seventy-six unarmoured cruisers.

MR. LAMBERT: The date asked for was 4th April, 1907. Of the total of £200,000, £165,700 is the estimated sum required for ships already built.

MR. BELLAIRS: Can the hon. Member tell the House what was the first date on which the Admiralty received information that Kynochs were adding mercuric chloride?

MR. LAMBERT: I am afraid that I cannot bear the date in mind.

MR. BELLAIRS: Is the hon. Member aware that the discovery was made in December, and this Committee was only appointed in April?

MR. LAMBERT: If the hon. Member knows that, why does he ask me for the information?

Cocanada Assault Case.

MR. O'GRADY (Leeds, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the action of Major Kemp, local district surgeon at Cocanada, who assaulted and severely injured a Madhwa student, and subsequently dragged him to the police station, handing him over to arrest for having said Bande Mataram on the high road; whether the student on regaining consciousness and asking for medical help was refused; whether as a result of this conduct, the excited people attacked the English club, leaving it in ruins; whether the district magistrate was also attacked, and that serious unrest is apprehended, sixty reserve police having to be sent from Rajahmundry; and, if so, what steps will be taken to allay the unrest and in the matter of Major Kemp's action.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE, Bristol, E.): I have seen a Report from the district magistrate to the effect that a boy who shouted Bande Mataram and put out his tongue at Captain Kemp was chastised by that officer. I am not aware that the boy was ever unconscious, and it is not the case that medical assistance was refused, for, at the request of his father, the assistant surgeon was sent to see him. In the attempt to wreck the English club the district magistrate was injured while endeavouring to restore order. Fifty-two persons have been sent up for trial, and additional police have been stationed at Coconada. So far as I am aware no further special measures are thought necessary.

Transvaal Loan.

MR. GEORGE FABER (York): I beg to ask the Prime Minister, what are the differentiating circumstances which have induced His Majesty's Government to provide the Imperial guarantee to the proposed £5,000,000 Transvaal loan, whereas no such guarantee is to be given in the case of the loan of £2,000,000 advertised to be issued by the Colony of Natal; and whether, in the case of Natal any such guarantee has ever been given.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): I see no advantage in attempting to justify the policy of His Majesty's Government in regard to the Transvaal Loan by Question and Answer across the House. The opportunities for its discussion afforded by the necessary Loan Bill will enable me to explain very fully to the House the reasons for the decision which has been taken. No such guarantee has ever been given to Natal. But owing to the invasion of Natal the Colonial Revenue in 1899 dropped heavily and the Bank of England advanced money to Natal under an informal guarantee. No application to Parliament was thought necessary.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): Can the Prime Minister or the right hon. Gentleman tell us when the Loan Bill is likely to come on for discussion?

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): Not at present.

Infringement of British Copyrights in the Far East.

MR. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary for State for Foreign Affairs, if he can state whether British books are being re-published in Tokio and printed there by phototype; whether these books are being sold in China bearing the impress printed in Edinburgh; and, if so, can he take any steps to remedy this injustice.

The SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): No information has been received in regard to the facts referred to in the first two Questions, but inquiry will be made at Tokio. We have no copyright agreement with China, nor is she a party to the Convention for the creation of an International Union for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works. Japan is a party to that Convention, and any one whose rights under that Convention are infringed can take proceedings in the Japanese Courts.

Anglo-Russian Agreement.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether any negotiations are still in progress with the Russian Government with respect to the conclusion of an Anglo-Russian agreement.

SIR EDWARD GREY: Yes, Sir.

Newfoundland Fisheries.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether an understanding has yet been arrived at with the United States Government respecting the Newfoundland fisheries question.

SIR EDWARD GREY: The Answer is in the negative. Negotiations are proceeding.

Whangpo Conservancy Dredging Tenders.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that for the dredging work to be carried out by the Whangpo Conservancy at Shanghai no British firms were asked to tender, although estimates were invited from French, German, and Dutch firms, and the work was given to a Dutch syndicate whose tender was the highest; whether, by the terms of the Conservancy Convention of 1905, all work was to be submitted to public tender; and whether he is aware of the reasons for the exclusion of British firms from tendering for this work.

SIR EDWARD GREY: It is a fact that by the terms of the Whangpo Conservancy Arrangements of 1905 all work has to be submitted to public tender; and I am not aware that in the present case these terms have been departed from. Dutch, French, German, and Japanese firms competed for the first contract for the building of a jetty and the dredging of the main channel; but no tender, I am informed, was forthcoming from the United Kingdom, though I have heard no reason given for this. Inquiry will be made.

Persia—Surrender of the Shah's Brother.

MR. LYNCH (Yorkshire, W.R., Ripon): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has any official information to the effect that the Salar-ed-Dowleh, brother of the Shah, has taken refuge in the British Consulate at Kirmanshah, claiming asylum for himself and his family; and, if so, what course His Majesty's Government propose to take in the matter.

SIR EDWARD GREY: His Majesty's Minister at Tehran has reported that the Salar-ed-Dowleh, who had arrived at the British Consulate at Kermanshah with one follower, has now been handed over to the Governor of Hamadan on the receipt by His Majesty's Minister of a formal assurance as to his safety, given by the Persian Government.

The Sinking Fund.

*CAPTAIN FABER (Hampshire, Andover): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is now his intention to devote Sinking Fund moneys to the purchase of Consols, seeing that the latter are the sole leaders of the market and that the markets wholly depend on them; and whether the reduction of floating debt is as advantageous as a purchase of Consols for the Sinking Fund at under 84.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.): I do not think it is in the public interest to announce beforehand the specific application of Sinking Fund moneys, but the hon. Member may be assured that the comparative advantages of the various securities to which the Sinking Fund can be applied will be carefully considered on each occasion.

Jamaica Loan Bill.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the Jamaica Loan Bill will be introduced this session; and, if so, whether he can give the date.

MR. ASQUITH: It is proposed to take power in the Public Works Loans Bill of this session to make the loan to Jamaica out of the Local Loans Fund. I cannot at present specify the date on which the Bill will be introduced.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): Is it proposed to throw this sum as well as the million for the Transvaal on the market?

MR. ASQUITH: I am not going on the market for this.

Inspection of Workshops of Charitable Institutions.

MR. ARTHUR HENDERSON (Durham, Barnard Castle): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many workplaces in the occupation of charitable institutions within the metropolitan area are entered on the lists of workshops and factories kept by the Factory Department; and what is the principal work carried on in them.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): According to the Inspectors' Reports thirteen factories, eighteen workshops, and six laundries in the metropolitan area are entered on the district registers as being conducted by religious or charitable institutions. The work carried on in these thirty-one institutions (not counting the six laundries) is the making of clothing, firewood cutting, letterpress printing, and basket making.

Sweated Industries.

MR. ARTHUR HENDERSON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can give the approximate number of persons employed in the sweated and other trades to which the statutory orders as to particulars of wages, etc., applied during 1906, or the number of workshops and factories subject to the provisions of those orders, and the number of firms convicted for infringement of the particulars section in the same period.

MR. GLADSTONE: The total number of factories and workshops to which the provisions as to particulars apply is 24,661, of which 9,624 are textile. The total number of persons employed in such works, including both piece and time workers, is according to the latest available figures a little over 1,500,000, of which 1,000,000 are textile workers. I have no trustworthy figures as to the number of outworkers who have been brought under the provisions in question. The number of persons convicted in 1906 of infringements of the particulars section and orders was seventeen.

Saturday Factory Labour in Leeds.

MR. J. RAMSAY MACDONALD (Leicester): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that, owing to the habitual employment of lads by a clothing firm in Leeds after 4 p.m. on Saturdays, complaint was made to the factory inspector's office; that the factory inspector replied that he had visited the firm at 4.25 p.m. on the following Saturday and had discovered lads being employed, but that, as he had been informed that they had had one hour for dinner, he did not consider that the legal time had been exceeded; whether complaint was thereupon made to the Home Office, and, after the lapse of a month, a reply was sent that the firm had been cautioned and that no further steps were to be taken; and whether he will state why no legal proceedings were taken against the firm.

Mr. GLADSTONE: The facts of the case are these. The complaint received by the inspector did not state that the boys were habitually employed after 4 on Saturday, but that the complainant had heard that the firm would be working their boys till 4.30 on the following day, that is, the day on which the letter was received. The inspector visited the premises the same afternoon at 4.30, and met seven boys coming downstairs with their coats on. He did not see them at work, but they told him they had only just finished. The inspector in his reply to the complainant did not say that the legal time had not been exceeded, but while stating that the boys had evidently been working for a short time after 4, mentioned that as the boys had had an hour for dinner instead of the half hour required on Saturdays, the total number of hours of work allowed on Saturday had not been exceeded. The ordinary practice at this factory is for the boys to leave off at 1 p.m. on Saturday although the law allows them to be employed until 4 p.m., and the inspector has reason to believe that only once before this year had they worked after 1 p.m. In these circumstances, and in view of the fact that the firm bear an excellent character, that they had never been warned or prosecuted before, and that there was nothing to show that overtime was habitual, the superintending inspector considered that the case would be sufficiently met by a caution. On the case being brought to my notice I made full inquiry, and found no reason to disagree with the view of the superintending inspector.

Mr. CROOKS (Woolwich: Has the firm been cautioned?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Yes, Sir.

Edalji Case.

Mr. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will say whether the refusal of compensation in the Edalji case has been influenced to any degree by reason of certain anonymous letters in the case; and, if so, has anybody been tried or indicted for writing these letters or are proceedings contemplated.

Mr. GLADSTONE: With regard to the first part of the Question, I have nothing to add to the statements contained in the Papers already laid before Parliament in connection with the case. As regards the second part, the anonymous letters formed part of the case submitted to the jury in the trial of Mr. Edalji. So far as I know, no further proceedings are contemplated against him or anyone else in connection with the letters.

Sir GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): Were the letters referred to those Edalji was supposed to be concerned in, or the letters which were written while he was in prison?

Mr. GLADSTONE: That Question should be addressed to the hon. Member who put the Question down.

Mr. VINCENT KENNEDY: Is Edalji being thus treated because he is not an Englishman?

[No Answer was returned.]

Kynoch's Cordite.

Mr. BELLAIRS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on what date was the discovery made of the presence of mercuric chloride in the cordite at Kynoch's magazine, near Cardiff, resulting in the seizure of 23,000 pounds; and whether he can state when the appeal trial of Kynoch, Limited, in reference to the addition of mercuric chloride to some blasting gelatine, is likely to be heard.

Mr. GLADSTONE: The 23,000 pounds of explosives which were seized at Mwyndwy Bach Farm, Glamorganshire, in December, 1906, was not cordite, but exclusively blasting explosives. The firm were suspected of using a masking agent in the summer of 1906, but it was not until just before the seizure that the Inspectors were in a position to prove the presence of mercury in blasting explosives. The case which Quarter Sessions agreed to state on the 24th April has only been drafted by the appellants within the last few days. This delay on their part makes it most unlikely that the case will be heard until after the Vacation.

Factory Accident Reports.

MR. H. J. TENNANT (Berwickshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the case of the Treasury versus the Dorset Hygienic Steam Laundry Company; whether the accident from which Edith Coles was suffering, and for the treatment of which after a period of eighteen days a doctor was called in, was one which should have been reported or not; and whether this accident would have been reportable under the law which was in force up to 1st January, 1907.

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes, Sir, the circumstances of this case, which was a prosecution on a number of charges by the Factory Inspector of the district, have been brought to my notice. One of the charges was for failure to report the accident referred to in the question. The defence was that the accident had not prevented the girl being employed on her ordinary work, which was alleged to be sorting, dusting, and doing odd jobs. The justices accepted the version put forward by the defence and dismissed the charge. The position would have been the same under the law in force up to the 1st January last as under the present law.

Submarine Bell Signals.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will state if the Zeeland Steam Navigation Company, whose steamers ply between Flushing and Queenborough, have been negotiating with the British Government with a view to supplying their vessels with submarine bell signals; will he say when the Government were first approached in this matter; at whose expense the necessary apparatus was to have been installed; and whether this system of signalling is now in operation at the ports mentioned with or without the approval of the Government.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. KEARLEY, Devonport): There have been no negotiations on this subject between the Zeeland Steamship Company and the Board of Trade, but I am informed by the Trinity House that in a letter, dated 2nd September, 1905, the Company asked them to fit submarine bell signals on certain lightships, and that, in August, 1906, the company offered to instal the apparatus on board the Tongue Lightship free of cost, and to bear all expenses for managing the apparatus until the Trinity House decided either to take it over or to remove it. The Elder Brethren did not feel able to accept the offer, pending a decision as to the funds out of which the cost of maintenance of such apparatus should be defrayed. They are, however, favourably impressed with the results of their own experiments and the question of expense has been under consideration by the Board of Trade, the Advisory Committee, and the Treasury. The Treasury hold that any such expenditure must fall on the General Lighthouse Fund, and in view of the large number of communications which the Board of Trade has received from shipowners and others in favour of the system since the meeting of the Advisory Committee it is proposed again to consult them on the matter. I am informed that the North Hinder Lightvessel has been fitted with a submarine bell, but I have no information of the establishment of such signals either at Queenborough or at Flushing.

Secondary School Regulations.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education when the new regulations for secondary schools will be issued.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouth, N.): These Regulations will, I hope, be issued early next week.

Postal Servants and the Auxiliary Forces.

MR. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General what arrangements, if any, are made between the postal and military authorities whereby postal officials belonging to His Majesty's Auxiliary Forces obtain facilities for attending the annual trainings.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Facilities are given, as far as possible, to Post Office servants, who are members of His

Majesty's Auxiliary Forces, to attend the annual periods of training. The application of the regulations to individual cases depends upon the conditions existing at the particular offices. It is only when the exigencies of the Post Office Service require it that permission to attend the training is withheld.

MR. SLOAN: Are there not officials at the present time in the Post Office who have had no training whatever?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: We do our best to grant leave to all officers who apply.

Press Telegrams.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he can give any approximate estimate of the annual loss incurred by the Post Office on Press telegrams.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): Careful calculations of the annnal expenditure properly chargeable to Press telegrams are being made, but are not yet completed. But taking the difference between the revenue derived from Press messages, and the estimated annual expenses involved (apart from interest on capital), the loss is considerable and is put at about a quarter of a million sterling.

MR. HAROLD COX: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether the rate of 2d. per hundred words for repeat Press messages was originally intended to apply to cases where the same message was directed to different addresses in the same town, and consequently only involved one electrical transmission; whether the practice has grown up of conceding the same rate to repeat messages handed in at one office, even though they may have to be telegraphed to a number of different towns; and, if so, under what authority this extended concession was granted.

*MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: It was not the original intention of the Act to limit the 2d. rate in the way suggested by the hon. Member, and there has been no modification of the system of charge. This is made clear not only by the words of the Telegraph Act of 1868, but also by the proceedings of the Select Committee of the House of Commons which considered the Bill. I might add that the practice is opposed to the views of the Post Office as expressed at the time.

MR. CHIOZZA MONEY (Paddington, N.) asked whether the whole of the public did not gain by the cheapness of the Press messages.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: That is a matter of opinion.

MR. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield): Are these privileges still to be given to the "Daily Liar"?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: They are given under an Act of Parliament, and I have no control over the matter unless the House chooses to repeal the Act.

Rules in Lunacy.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General whether it is proposed to amend the rules in lunacy to allow of the appearance before him of the representative of the local authority in cases where an application is made to deal with the estate of a patient in a county asylum; whether he is aware of the circumstances under which a sum of only £30 a year was recently allowed by the Master in Lunacy in respect of the maintenance of a lunatic named Samuel Waters, at the London County Asylum, Claybury, whose estate approximates to £900, the said lunatic having no dependents, and the cost to the ratepayers of his maintenance and lodging at the asylum amounting to about £39 a year; and whether he will consider the advisability of giving an opportunity for the asylum authorities to appeal against such an order.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir JOHN WALTON, Leeds, S.): The Master in Lunacy heard in this case the representatives both of the London County Council to whom the asylum belongs and of the guardians. The allowance of £30 a year was made at their suggestion. If it is proposed to increase this a fresh application should be made to the Master, or an Appeal, which he is quite willing to allow, brought from his decision.

Ballina Fairs Patent.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether the patent granting new fairs at Ballina, county Mayo, on the application of the urban district council, has been prepared; and will he cause the matter to have early attention, so that the holding of the new fairs may begin as soon as possible.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. CHERRY, Liverpool, Exchange): The Lord-Lieutenant's fiat for the preparation of the letters patent in this case has been issued, and the patent will, it is hoped, be ready at an early date.

Mr. Larkin, J.P., of Ballinasloe.

MR. BECKETT (Yorkshire, N.R., Whitby): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether Mr. Larkin, J.P., of Ballinasloe, has yet replied to the two letters from the Lord Chancellor, addressed to him on 18th May and 30th May, warning him of the consequences of attending as a magistrate at any petty sessions outside the limits of his district; what was the nature of Mr. Larkin's reply, if any, received before 5th June; and, in the event of no reply having reached the Lord Chancellor, what steps have been taken to enforce obedience with his Lordship's directions.

MR. CHERRY: The Lord Chancellor informs me that on the 4th instant he received from Mr. Larkin a written undertaking that he would not exceed the limits of his jurisdiction as an *ex-officio* magistrate. This Answer applies to the similar Question of the hon. Member for South Antrim, which is addressed to my right hon. friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland.

Roscrea Agrarian Disturbances.

MR. JAMES CAMPBELL (Dublin University): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland what steps, if any, he proposes to take with reference to the persons alleged to be implicated in the agrarian disturbances at Roscrea; and whether, having regard to the action of the local justices, he proposes to proceed in this case by indictment at the assizes.

MR. CHERRY: The evidence in this case is to be submitted to me, and I shall then consider the question whether further proceedings are to be taken.

This Question had appeared on the Paper without any name attached to it.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory), asked if it was in order for Questions to appear on the Paper anonymously.

*MR. SPEAKER: It was not intended to be anonymous.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Is it in order for an hon. Gentleman to hand in a typewritten Question without putting any name to it? It has occurred more than once, and typewritten Questions had been handed round these benches and put down, and then some hon. Member has assumed the paternity at the proper time.

*MR. SPEAKER: This Question was not typewritten. It sometimes happens that in the hurry of the moment an hon. Gentleman hands in a Question and omits to attach his name to it. Such Questions are bound to appear, and it is only when they do so that the hon. Member discovers his omission.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Is it right for the clerks to receive a Question without the name? Does not every Question on the Paper have to be vouched for by the clerks?

*MR. SPEAKER: I think the hon. Member himself would be the first to blame the clerks if they did not put his Question or notice in the Votes and Proceedings under such circumstances.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I never make the mistake. I want to know as a point of order if it is proper for the clerks to accept a Question without knowing who is the author?

*MR. SPEAKER: The Answer is in the affirmative.

MR. LEIF JONES: Is it not the duty of the clerks to see that the name is attached?

*MR. SPEAKER: Certainly, but sometimes an hon. Member is slightly impatient, and goes away before the clerk has had time to notice the omission.

Marquess of Ely's Fermanagh Estate.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that arrangements for the sale of the Fermanagh estate of the Marquess of Ely were made very shortly after the passing of the Purchase Act of 1903, but could not be proceeded with owing to the decision of Mr. Justice Ross that Lord Ely would not be entitled to the bonds owing to a defect in the Act; that the sale thus lost priority, as so many estates came in before the passing of the Amending Act in 1904; and if a fresh arrangement for sale were now made would the Estates Commissioners be prepared to deal promptly with the estate, so as to save the tenants in some degree from the loss caused by the delay.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): The Estates Commissioners inform me that no proceedings for the sale of this estate are at present before them. If such proceedings should be instituted, the Commissioners would duly consider any application to expedite the sale which might be made.

Borisokane District Council.

MR. HOGAN (Tipperary, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that three gentlemen, Messrs. John Flannery, Stephen Liffey, and Hugh Delaney, members of the Borisokane Rural District Council, have been summoned to the next petty sessions in the district for a surcharge of £9 5s. 4d., being the amount of a bill of costs paid in connection with the Labourers' Acts; is he aware that the auditor made the surcharge on the grounds that the bill of costs in question was not produced, the same not having been returned by the taxing master; and whether, seeing that the taxing master's certificate was produced at the audit and ignored by the auditor, he will cause the Local Government Board to stay proceedings whilst full inquiries are made into this transaction, and thus save further expense and confusion in the matter.

MR. BIRRELL: The facts are stated in the Question with substantial accuracy, except that the persons surcharged gave, in their appeal to the Local Government Board, quite a different reason for their failure to produce the bill of costs, which was a necessary voucher for the payment. In their appeal they stated that the council were unable to procure the bill of costs from the solicitors who represented them at the taxation. The Local Government Board upheld the surcharge, as it would be quite irregular to allow the payment to pass without the production of the necessary vouchers.

Mr. Reddy, J.P., M.P.

MR. MOORE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that Mr. A. H. Burnett, at a meeting at Banagher on 16th June, was denounced by the honourable Member for King's County, Birr Division, and that he advised the people to make Burnett sell certain lands and to make him shiver in his shoes; if the Lord Chancellor has received a complaint against the honourable Member in this connection as a justice of the peace, and if the Government have received reports thereon from the local police; and what action will be taken.

MR. BIRRELL: I am informed that the attention of the Lord Chancellor has been called to this matter and it is now under his consideration.

Mr. Larkin, J.P.

MR. MOORE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that the Mr. Larkin, J.P., who has been cautioned by the Lord Chancellor, was at one time under police surveillance with a view to extradition to the United States for an offence committed there, and that this man was also convicted at the assizes for an offence committed in Ireland; and if the Government propose to continue this man in the commission of the peace.

MR. BIRRELL: Mr. Larkin is a justice of the peace, under the provisions of the Local Government Act, 1898, by virtue of his chairmanship of a rural district council. The Government have no information that Mr. Larkin is under any disqualification by reason of his having been convicted of a criminal offence. He was not extradited to the United States for any offence

Mr. MOORE: Was Mr. Larkin under police surveillance with a view to extradition?

Mr. BIRRELL: I do not know.

Mr. MOORE: Will the right hon. Gentleman inquire?

Mr. BIRRELL: If the hon. Member likes.

Irish Land Problem.

Mr. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether he is aware of the prevalence of disappointment in Ireland among young people, who in the absence of other industries must get land or emigrate, at the failure of the Land Act of 1903 to make the evicted, untenanted, and non-residential lands available for them; and, seeing that these are self-reliant people desiring to practice agriculture and to pay the full value of the land, while regarding their claim as one for restitution, has he considered the danger of leaving them longer to their own resources without hope from Parliament, or will he, by undertaking legislation on this subject for the whole of Ireland next session, allay the disappointment and furnish a reason to those who counsel continued forbearance.

I beg also to ask the Prime Minister whether his attention has been called to the losses reported by the Treasury as resulting from the working of the Land Act of 1903, and now to be made good by Irish ratepayers, to the individual losses ignored by the Treasury, though aggregating a larger total, and to the fact that, owing to the abolition of inspection, vendors as a rule fix the prices and bonus they are to be paid, with the result that the cost of land, while stationary in Great Britain, has increased by 68½ per cent. in Ireland, and the average price of a £100 holding has risen from £3,017 to £4,897, being £1,880 more than the Land Commission would, after inspection under previous Purchase Acts, have certified the holding to be security for; and whether legislation will be introduced next session to arrest this growing danger.

Mr. BIRRELL: My right hon. friend has asked me to answer these two Questions. As regards the first Question, I would remind the hon. Member that the problem of obtaining land for the purpose of bettering the condition of the people is engaging the attention of the Royal Commission on Congestion in Ireland, and I have already announced that it is the intention of the Government to introduce amending legislation after they have had the advantage of studying the Report of that Commission. In the second Question the hon. Member renews a question which he has repeatedly raised before. The enactment that advances shall be made without inspection for security in cases which come within the zones is one of the main provisions of the Act of 1903. The Government are carefully watching the operation of the Act in this and other respects in order to decide whether amending legislation may be necessary. I cannot at present make any more definite statement on the subject.

Mr. MOORE: Does the forbearance referred to in the Question consist in removing cattle from Westmeath to Wicklow and Kildare?

Mr. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): Where is Moore's bull?

Irish Public Appointments.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that prior to the Local Government Act, 1898, the medical appointments in the North and South Dublin Unions were held by an equal number of Protestants and Roman Catholics, and that since the passing of that Act every vacancy occurring in the medical offices has been filled by a Roman Catholic; and if the Government will take steps to secure fair treatment for Protestants.

Mr. BIRRELL: I am not aware whether the facts are as stated in the Question. The Local Government Board have no information as to the religious belief of medical officers of unions whether appointed before or since the passing of the Local Government Act, 1898. In any event, the matter is not one in which the Government have power to interfere.

Mr. MEEHAN (Queen's County, Leix): Is it not the case that before the passing of the Act of 1898 the ninety-eight medical appointments for Ireland were almost exclusively held by Protestants?

*MR. SPEAKER: Notice had better be given of the Question.

MR. BIRRELL: A good many things go on in Ireland of which I am not aware.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: Is it not the duty of the right hon. Gentleman to obtain the information?

MR. BIRRELL: I should be sorry to seek official information as to anybody's belief.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: Consider the difference in the tone of the right hon. Gentleman's reply to my Question and to the——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. MEEHAN: Was not the object of the Act of 1898 to give the majority of the people of Ireland a fair proportion of the appointments?

*MR. SPEAKER: It is open to anyone to form his own judgment as to the object of Parliament.

MR. DELANY: Is it not the case that in the Queen's County thirty-four out of thirty-five public appointments were held by Protestants before 1898?

*MR. SPEAKER: Notice should be given of that.

MR. FLAVIN: Was not the Act passed by the Unionist Government?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order.

Irish Grazing Disputes.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to a joint statement by six grazing farmers that, in compliance with the wishes of the several branches of the United Irish League in the neighbourhood, they had withdrawn their cattle from the ranches in the district; and whether, in view of the fact that the law of the land has been to a large extent supplanted by the law of the United Irish League in this particular district, he will take more energetic steps than he has done in the past to prevent persons being coerced from doing what they have a legal right to do.

MR. BIRRELL: The police authorities inform me that a letter to the effect stated, purporting to be signed by six persons at Mohill, has appeared in a Roscommon newspaper. The police have no evidence that these persons have been intimidated or coerced into surrendering their grazing farms. I have repeatedly stated that the police have given, and will continue to give, all possible protection to the holders of grazing farms and all other persons in the exercise of their legal rights.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG asked the right hon. Gentleman whether there was any cause for the surrender of farms in the west of Ireland except the intimidation of the United Irish League.

MR. BIRRELL: There may be a desire to promote the peace of the country.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: If that is a sample——

*THE SPEAKER: Order, order. The hon. Member is not entitled to argue an Answer. He can only ask for information.

Mr. Flanagan's Conviction.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, in an application to quash an order of certain justices of county Clare, by which Mr. Flanagan was sentenced to a month's imprisonment in default of payment of certain fines for having acted as chairman of Corofin District Council when he had no right to do so, owing to his having been convicted and sentenced to a term of hard labour, Chief Baron Palles said that in asking them to quash the conviction they were asked to do a monstrous act of injustice to which he and his brother Judge could not yield, and the Court refused the application with costs; and, seeing that within a few days Flanagan was unconditionally released, whether it is to be understood that in future fines and penalties inflicted for breaking the law with reference to unauthorised persons acting as district councillors will be remitted.

MR. BIRRELL: I am informed that the Lord Chief Baron's observations quoted in the Question had reference to one particular ground put forward for quashing the conviction, namely, that one of the convicting magistrates was biased and therefore not qualified to act. The Court held that the conviction was valid. The Lords Justices subsequently ordered Mr. Flanagan's release. He had then suffered imprisonment for five weeks. The sentence of imprisonment amounted to four months, and not one as stated in the Question.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: Is it the intention of the Government in all cases of imprisonment for agrarian offences to cut down the sentences by three-quarters?

MR. BIRRELL: No, Sir.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: Can the right hon. Gentleman refer me to a single case——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): As this is a reflection on Mr. Flanagan, will the right hon. Gentleman say if he was not convicted and sentenced to hard labour for a purely political offence under the Crimes Act which does not prevail in England?

MR. BIRRELL: He was convicted under what the hon. Member calls the Crimes Act.

Conviction of a Clontarf Publican.

MR. MOONEY (Newry): I beg to ask the Attorney-General for Ireland if he will state what course he will take in view of the action of the Dublin Metropolitan Police Magistrate in fining, on a private prosecution, a Clontarf publican for opening on Sunday, and if the Attorney-General directed the police to prosecute in this matter.

MR. CHERRY: It is not my intention to interfere in this matter at all. It was a private prosecution, brought, I understand, by some advocates of the Temperance Party, who secured a conviction.

MR. MOONEY: Does the right hon. Gentleman say they had no authority from him?

MR. CHERRY: The prosecution was a private prosecution.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Is it not a fact that during the discussion of the Sunday Closing Bill last year, it was understood by general agreement that Clontarf should be regarded as part of the City of Dublin under the Act, being part of the municipality of Dublin?

MR. CHERRY: I understand that is so, and I believe that the intention of the Act was as stated, and that was one of the reasons why I directed the police not to prosecute. The police had nothing to do with it.

MR. MOONEY asked if immediate steps would be taken to see that this mistake was remedied, and prevent futher prosecutions.

MR. CHERRY: It is not for me to promise legislation on the part of the Government.

Belfast Strike.

MR. J. RAMSAY MACDONALD: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether he can inform the House under what circumstances the forces of the Crown supplied with ball cartridges were employed yesterday in Belfast in clearing the streets of trade union pickets, whether the Riot Act was read, and what is the state of affairs this morning.

MR. BIRRELL: The military are being employed in Belfast upon the representation of the Lord Mayor and the local civil authority that military assistance was absolutely necessary in order to secure peace for that great city. The military formed cordons across the streets for the purpose of keeping back the people who were likely to interfere or intimidate imported labourers. So far as the Government know, no pickets have been interfered with. It was simply in the interests of the public peace that any man was kept outside the cordon. I have no information as to the Riot Act being read. My information is that peace has been preserved, and there is no occasion for alarm.

MR. J. RAMSAY MACDONALD asked whether there was any truth in the telegram which he handed to the right hon. Gentleman last night, alleging that pickets had been interfered with. The telegram was sent by an official of the trade union.

MR. BIRRELL: It was upon the basis of that telegram that I obtained the information I have given to the House.

MR. MOORE: Has it become necessary to resort to military power in Belfast because every available constable has been drafted into the west of Ireland?

MR. BIRRELL: The hon. and learned Gentleman knows more about the business even than I do, and it is not very desirable to introduce into Belfast constables from other parts of Ireland. All persons who are acquainted with that city know that that is not the best way to keep peace.

MR. SLOAN asked whether it was not the fact that there was no riot at all.

MR. BIRRELL: I believe that is so. The local civil authority, having regard to the position of affairs, thought it desirable that the civil force should be rein forced, and it was on their responsibility that this request was made.

MR. J. RAMSAY MACDONALD: These soldiers were supplied with ball cartridge. In view of the reasons for calling out these troops was it necessary to do that?

MR. BIRRELL: I think that is the usual practice.

*MR. SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that negotiations were going on to settle this strike, that the smaller companies had agreed to meet the men's representatives, but that the larger companies would not agree, and that that was the cause of the unrest.

MR. BIRRELL: That is no part of my responsibility in the matter.

MR. O'GRADY (Leeds, E.): Can the military be supplied with ball cartridge until the Riot Act is read? [Cries of "No."]

[No Answer was returned.]

Irish Teachers' Salaries.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether he is aware that the average salaries of principal men teachers in Scotland is £180 (with occupation of houses free of rent in 1,592 cases) as against £105 in Ireland; of principal women teachers in Scotland is £92 (with occupation of houses free of rent in 523 cases), as against £85 in Ireland; of assistant men teachers in Scotland £124, as against £74 in Ireland; of assistant women teachers in Scotland £77, as against £58 in Ireland; whether he can give any explanation of the differences of over fifty per cent. in payments for the same class of work; and what steps, if any, the Government intend to adopt to pay the national school teachers of Ireland a fair remuneration for their services.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. RUNCIMAN, Dewsbury): I am not in a position to say whether the figures in the Question are accurate or not; but in any case they cannot afford a basis for a true comparison between the two countries. The proportion of principal teachers to the whole number of teachers is much larger in Ireland than in Scotland; and the average number of children in attendance for each principal teacher is more than four times as great in Scotland as in Ireland. I may add that the grant from the Exchequer per child in average attendance is considerably higher in Ireland than in Scotland. I am not able to suggest any increase in the provision now made.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: I may say I got my figures from the Ministers of the Departments concerned.

Loans under the Labourers' (Ireland) Acts.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he can say whether, when introducing a clause in the Public Works Loans Bill of this year dealing with the question of outstanding loans under the Labourers' (Ireland) Acts, he will make it apply to loans given to farmers in Ireland for the purpose of building hay-sheds on their farms and have it retospective.

MR. ASQUITH: No, Sir. The case of the Labourers' Act loans is exceptional in some respects. I do not propose to interfere with the conditions of other outstanding loans.

Ireland and Indirect Taxation.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state what has been the proportion of direct to indirect taxation for the ten years last past in Ireland and in Great Britain, and also for the years 1807–17, or, if not available, for the earliest ten years after the Union.

MR. ASQUITH: The proportions during the last five years have been:—

	Great Britain.		Ireland.	
	Direct.	Indirect.	Direct.	Indirect.
1902–3 .	53·9 p.c.	46·1 p.c.	26·6 p.c.	73·4 p.c.
1903–4 .	50·6 p.c.	49·4 p.c.	27·8 p.c.	72·2 p.c.
1904–5 .	50·8 p.c.	49·2 p.c.	27·4 p.c.	72·6 p.c.
1905–6 .	51·7 p.c.	48·3 p.c.	26·7 p.c.	73·3 p.c.
1906–7 .	52·8 p.c.	47·2 p.c.	27·9 p.c.	72·1 p.c.

The calculations involve a detailed and somewhat lengthy analysis of the yield of each item of Revenue year by year, and I have not had the figures worked out for the whole of the ten years asked for. I will, however, obtain them, if the hon. Member wishes. Particulars are not available to determine on the same lines the proportions of direct and indirect taxation in Great Britain and Ireland respectively in the years between 1807 and 1817. But more than 87 per cent. of the Irish Tax Revenue during that period was raised by duties of Customs and Excise. The first year for which figures are available is 1819–20. In that year, the proportions were: Great Britain, direct taxes 30·4 per cent., indirect taxes, 69·6 per cent.; Ireland, direct taxes, 21·8 per cent., indirect taxes, 78·2 per cent.

Irish Financial Relations.

MR. KETTLE (Tyrone, E.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether in view of the fact that the finding of the Financial Relations Commission, 1894–6, has never been seriously disputed, that the Report, signed by all the Commissioners, declared the tax revenue of Ireland to be about one-eleventh of that of Great Britain, while the relative taxable capacity of Ireland is very much smaller, and is not estimated by any of us as exceeding one-twentieth, and that the injustice admitted to exist in 1896 has been aggravated by the increase of taxation, he will take steps to redeem the pledge given by him in the House on 1st May, 1906, that he intended seriously, with the best will in the world, to investigate the whole of this expenditure and see how far it was possible to adjust on a fairer basis what he admitted was the unsatisfactory and inequitable financial relations between the two portions of the kingdom. The hon. Member in putting the Question asked leave to explain that the first part of the Question was a quotation from the Report of the Financial Relations Commission, and the last part from a speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

*MR. SPEAKER: In that case, it probably ought not to be put at all, as quotations are not admitted.

MR. KETTLE said he was a new Member and unaware of the practice.

As the inverted commas were not given, perhaps the Question might be considered in order.

MR. ASQUITH: The tax revenue of Ireland—which was declared by the Royal Commission in 1896 to be about one-eleventh of the tax revenue of Great Britain—amounted in 1905–6 to less than one-fourteenth of the tax revenue of Great Britain. So it is not correct to say that the increase of taxation since 1896 has altered the proportion to the disadvantage of Ireland. The whole question has received and is receiving careful consideration from my right hon. friend the Chief Secretary and myself.

MR. KETTLE asked whether the right hon. Gentleman proposed to take any steps to reform this system of colossal and automatic theft.

MR. ASQUITH said he thought the hon. Member was not quite justified in those very resounding epithets. The whole question was receiving careful consideration.

MR. BYLES (Salford, N.) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that not only were the Irish people smarting under a sense of injustice from excessive taxation, but that the English people also felt the shame of accepting an excessive contribution from the Cinderella of the Empire. Would not the right hon. Gentleman say something more definite?

MR. ASQUITH: I have already said it is receiving careful, and I hope sympathetic, consideration.

MR. HAROLD COX asked the right hon. Gentleman whether any poor man paid in Ireland a higher rate of taxation than in England.

MR. ASQUITH: No, Sir.

Loans to the Irish Land Purchase Fund.

MR. GEORGE FABER: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the temporary loans made from sums in the hands of the National Debt Commissioners for the purposes of the Irish Land Purchase Fund have been made out of cash balances in their hands available for investment; if not, out of what funds; what is the total amount of the temporary loans so made, and for how long have they been made, and at what rates of interest; whether seeing that he has stated that there will be no further issue of 2¾ per cent. stock for Irish land purchase before the 31st December next, any further temporary loans will be made by the National Debt Commissioners in the meantime; and whether the loans already made, or to be made, will be continued until a further issue of Land Stock.

MR. ASQUITH: The temporary loans to the Irish Land Purchase Fund have been made out of cash balances in the hands of the National Debt Commissioners available for investment, and at present amount to £1,020,000. The loans extend over the period from 7th May, 1907, to date, and will be redeemed periodically by the creation of an equivalent amount of guaranteed 2¾ per cent. stock in favour of the National Debt Commissioners. Pending the creation of stock, which will be notified from time to time in the *Gazette*, interest is payable at the rate of 3 per cent. per annum. It is intended to adopt the same system for the remainder of the calendar year.

MR. GEORGE FABER: If these advances had not been made would not these cash balances have fallen into the Sinking Fund?

MR. ASQUITH: It is only another form of investment.

MR. GEORGE FABER: Is it a legitimate operation to take money from the Sinking Fund for this purpose.

MR. ASQUITH: That is a matter of opinion.

MR. GEORGE FABER: I want the right hon. Gentleman's opinion.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not entitled to ask that.

National School Teachers' Insurance against Accident.

MR. MOORE: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he can yet state what determination the Treasury have arrived at with a view to enabling the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland to indemnify their managers against accidents suffered by national school teachers.

MR. RUNCIMAN: It has been decided that the Treasury cannot assume any liability for injuries sustained by national school teachers, who are appointed by, and under the control of, the local managers and are not in the employment of the State.

Irish Taxation.

MR. KETTLE: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he can state the amount of Ireland's contribution to tax revenue for each year from 1897 to 1907; what proportion did the contribution of Ireland bear to that of Great Britain; and, if the contribution of Ireland had been based on the unanimous finding of the Financial Relations Commission, 1894–6 (*i.e.*, limited to one-twentieth of the tax revenue raised in Great Britain), what would have been the amounts for the years in question.

MR. RUNCIMAN: As the reply to this Question includes a good many figures I will cause it to be circulated with the Votes.†

Swine Fever in Ireland.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, can he give the actual date and port of importation of the one case of alleged swine fever from Ireland during the last three years; was this animal passed as free from disease by veterinary inspectors before being exported from Ireland; and can he state by what officer at the English port this case was alleged to be one of swine fever.

THE TREASURER OF THE HOUSEHOLD (Sir EDWARD STRACHEY, Somersetshire, S.): The animal in question was imported at Milford on 21st November, 1905, being one of a consignment sent from Waterford to Cardiff. The Inspector of the Irish Department who examined the consignment before exportation saw no signs of swine fever. There is no veterinary inspection of pigs landed from Ireland at Milford, and the disease was not discovered until the pig was slaughtered at Cardiff on 25th November, when an examination of the carcase showed disease of long standing. The diagnosis was confirmed by the veterinary officers of the Board.

Irish Swine Exports.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, can he state whether the Law Officers of the Board were consulted as to the legality of the Orders, dated 22nd November, 1904, and 26th January, 1906, with reference to the importation of pigs from Ireland; and was their approval obtained before these Orders were promulgated.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: The Answer is in the affirmative.

Limavady Post Office.

MR. BARRIE (Londonderry, N.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he will state what were the annual Returns of postal matter dealt with in Limavady post office from 1895 to 1906 inclusive.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: The complete Returns of postal matter dealt with at the Limavady office for the years in question are not available. The delivered correspondence, however, showed a fairly steady increase from 1895 till 1905, since which date it has fallen off.

MR. SLOAN: Then it was not because of a decrease of work that the office was reduced from the *status* of a head office?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: No, but because it was thought that better control could be exercised from Derry.

Gaelic League and Educational Works.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether any, and, if so, what, opportunity will be given to the writer of the Special Report on Educational Subjects, Volume 17, to make a personal investigation into the real facts of the work of the Gaelic League in promoting an educational and intellectual movement similar to that initiated by Bishop Grundtvig in Denmark; and can he say what opportunity, if any, will be given, now or subsequently, to this writer to withdraw, in an equally public manner, the unwarranted reflection on a great educational movement in Ireland to which currency has been given in this volume.

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† See page 73–4.

MR. MCKENNA: The writer of the Report referred to is not an officer of the Board of Education and it does not, therefore, rest with the Board to give or refuse him an opportunity of making any inquiries which he may desire to undertake, or of modifying, either publicly or otherwise, any expressions or opinions contained in the Report.

MR. BOLAND: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that in the last three days a Paper has been issued correcting a statement in the original volume ?

MR. MCKENNA: If the writer desired to correct anything he would of course have an opportunity of doing so. The question of correction rests solely with him.

MR. BOLAND: Has the writer been informed that his statement has been challenged ?

MR. MCKENNA: I will inquire.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Out of what fund is he paid ?

MR. MCKENNA: The Inquiries Vote.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: We shall probably take a lively interest in that Vote.

Subsidised Steamer Services for Canada.

MR. HAROLD COX: I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether a Ministerial Committee has been appointed by His Majesty's Government to consider proposals for a subsidised steamship line between Great Britain and Canada; if so, whether he can assure the House that the Government will not assent to any proposal which conflicts either with the recommendations of the Select Committee on steamship subsidies or with the pledges given by the Liberal Party at the general election to promote economy in public expenditure; whether this Ministerial Committee has had before it a Canadian proposition that the line must be equipped in such a manner that perishable products of the Dominion may be landed in the mother country in the best condition; and whether it is part of the policy of His Majesty's Government to tax British and Irish farmers in order to enable competing Canadian produce to be carried across the Atlantic at less than commercial rates.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The proposals referred to are being examined by certain members of the Government with the aid of experts. Until this examination has been completed, I am not in a position to make any statement on the matter.

Small Landholders (Scotland) Bill.

MR. C. E. PRICE (Edinburgh, Central): I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether, in view of the financial clauses of the Small Landholders (Scotland) Bill, he will appoint a Committee of this House or a Royal Commission to inquire into the financial relations of Scotland to the British Treasury.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am not disposed to have an inquiry into the financial relations of Scotland to the Treasury. I do not think there is any danger of Scotland overdrawing its account.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, College): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that Scotland does not get her share of the good things of the United Kingdom ? Is she not the Cinderella of the Empire ?

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: You have only to look at the Treasury Bench.

SIR H. CAMPBELL BANNERMAN: I have said I do not think there is any danger of Scotland overdrawing its account.

Cancer Research.

*CAPTAIN FABER: I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether he can now state if he is able to appoint a Royal Commission to examine into the causes of the national scourge, cancer.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Since the hon. and gallant Member gave notice of this Question some little time ago, I have made inquiries of the authorities who are best qualified to express an opinion on a matter which we must all feel to be of the utmost importance, and I am advised that it would not be expedient at present to recommend the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the causes of cancer. Though much research work is being systematically carried on in this country in connection with the Imperial Cancer Research Fund and otherwise and abroad, I am advised that much remains to be done before any facts can be brought before a Royal Commission with any likelihood of their making such an inquiry fruitful for the public advantage.

MR. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham): Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the advisability of giving financial assistance to the Imperial Cancer Research Fund?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: That does not arise out of the Question.

Blocking Motions.

LORD R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.): I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether he can state what are the Government proposals for dealing with the practice of blocking Motions.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Government propose to have a Select Committee on this subject, which will be nominated without delay.

The London Institution.

MR. WATERLOW (Islington, N.): I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether he is aware that the London Institution in Finsbury Circus, which is governed by a Royal Charter and regulated by an Act of Parliament of 1822, has for some time found great difficulty in carrying out the objects for which it was established in a manner adequate to its resources; and whether he will consider the desirability of instituting a Parliamentary inquiry with a view to the adoption of such measures as may seem desirable for increasing its usefulness.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have no official information. If my hon. friend will suggest to the persons responsible for the conduct of the Institution that they should communicate with the Board of Education, the Board will, I have no doubt, look into the matter.

Grand Committee.

*SIR FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan): I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether he will consider the desirability of a Report of each Standing Committee, showing the proceedings of each, being printed and circulated when clauses as amended are from time to time printed and circulated during the sittings of the Committee.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I think we had better in the meantime continue the practice which has so long prevailed in this matter.

SIR FRANCIS POWELL: Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the point?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: We are watching the matter.

MR. BYLES: Could not the Committee now sitting on the *Parliamentary Debates* be asked to consider this question?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I adhere to my opinion it is better to go on as at present.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

James Carrige Rushe Lardner, esquire, for the County of Monaghan (North Monaghan Division).

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member form Standing Committee C (in respect of the Small Holdings and Allotments Bill): Mr. Herbert Craig; and had appointed in substitution (in respect of the Small Holdings and Allotments Bill): Mr. Morrell.

Report to lie upon the Table.

EVICTED TENANTS (IRELAND).

*THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.), in moving for leave to introduce a Bill "to facilitate the provision of land for certain evicted tenants in Ireland, and for other purposes connected therewith, and to make provision with respect to the tenure of office by the Estates Commissioners," said: The object of the Bill which I am now asking leave to introduce may, I think, fairly be stated to be outside the realm—wide as that realm unfortunately still is—of existing Irish controversies. It is an enabling Bill, for it might well be intituled a Bill to enable both Houses of Parliament to keep their faith with the Irish people. Happily I need say nothing to revive the past. Everybody who has the least acquaintance with Irish history during the last thirty years will thank me for not reminding them of some of its worst features. Sixteen years ago, in 1891, the right hon. Gentleman now leading the Opposition, being then in office, accepted an Amendment to the Land Bill of that year, an Amendment which was recognised at the time to be, and I am sure was intended at the time to be, evidence of the intention of Parliament to do what it could to secure the speedy reinstatement of those tenants who had been evicted during what has often been described as a social war. Through no fault of the promoters of that legislation the 13th Clause of the Act of 1891 proved ineffective; and three years later, in 1894, my right hon. friend the Secretary of State for India being then Chief Secretary, there came the Mathew Commission and Report, and the Bill of that year. I will not refer to the heated debates which then occurred, but I think I may fairly say that amidst all the heat there was on both sides of the House recognition of the necessity, if not of the justice, of setting about the accomplishment of the restoration of the evicted tenants. However, the Bill of 1894 did not become law. But a brighter day subsequently dawned. The representatives of the landlords and of the tenants met together in friendly conclave at the famous and beneficent Landlords' Conference, happily free from that Parliamentary rancour and from those transmitted Parliamentary hatreds, half real, half sham, which are the curse of Parliamentary government. It is not too much to say that the Landlords' Conference amounted to a concordat, and one of the terms of that concordat reduced to writing was the speedy restoration of the evicted tenants. The Landlords' Conference was followed by that great Land Purchase Act of 1903, with which the name of my right hon. friend the Member for Dover is so honourably associated, and which by the terms of its second clause enabled evicted tenants, as there described, to become the purchasers of their former holdings. That is now four years ago. I will not detain the House by describing how it has come about that this work of restoration has been so slow, but I will refer them to the Special Report of the Estates Commissioners just issued and circulated, and would beg of every hon. Member, who desires to take a useful part in this healing work, to make himself fully acquainted with that Report. What, then, is the position at this moment of time? The Irish Government has been able by hard work and by the appointment and reinforcement of a special staff practically to complete the investigation of the claims of all persons asserting themselves to be evicted tenants within the meaning of the Act and seeking reinstatement. The total number of applications lodged with the Estates Commissioners from 1903 to to-day is 8,401. The total number of evicted tenants, or representatives of evicted tenants, who have already been restored to their former holdings, or provided with new holdings, up to date is 1,033. Of these, 946 have been restored to their old holdings, and eighty-seven to new holdings. In the case of seventy-three tenants, owners have intimated their acceptance of the price named by the Commissioners for the former holdings, while in 122 cases the price named by the Commissioners is at present under consideration of the owners. There have been 2,935 applications rejected by the Commissioners, after inquiry and report in each case by their inspectors, and for reasons which will be found stated in paragraph 20 of the Report. There have been 1,609 cases reported upon by the Commissioners and found to consist of, in their opinion, fit and proper persons to be reinstated either on their old holdings, or, if that be impossible, on new holdings; and the Commissioners have estimated that the outside number of evicted tenants remaining to be reinstated, including those 1,609, will not exceed the total number of 2,000. The problem therefore is, how are we, after all these years, to set about in the quickest possible way to effect the restoration, not of an unknown and uncertain number of evicted tenants, but of those 2,000 persons, assuming that to be the outside figure, whose cases have been or will have been inquired into and reported upon by the persons selected by the Act of 1903 for that and other purposes? The persons to be reinstated, it must be understood, will be reinstated as purchasers under the Act of 1903. Anybody who regards the lapse of time and the number of tenants remaining to be dealt with will, I think, agree with me that in order to make a clean job of this business within a reasonable time the principle of compulsion must be recognised and adopted. I do not imagine that in very many cases it will have to be resorted to; but that the principle must be affirmed is, I think, generally recognised by all persons who have any intimate knowledge of the subject; and I will venture specially to refer, for the guidance of Members of this House, all of whom will, I hope, take a deep and abiding interest in this question, to Paragraphs 40 to 43 of the special Report to which I have already referred. The amount of land that will be required for the purpose may be taken at the very outside to be a total area of 80,000 acres; and the object of this Bill is to set going machinery, already happily in existence, to accomplish this purpose. To set up any new tribunal is greatly to be deprecated. "Better to bear the ills we have than fly to others that we know not of." The Bill of 1903 created three Land Commissioners, who are still in possession—I will not say in enjoyment—of their offices, and who have during the last four years garnered an enormous amount of experience in connection with the value of Irish land. They and their inspectors have been the persons who have negotiated and arranged for over £5,500,000 worth of Irish land; and if they are unable to discharge the restricted duties imposed upon them by this Bill, to ascertain the value of some 80,000 acres, I do not know anybody who is. The thing to be judged is the value of land; and I can see no reason whatever, great as is my respect for the law, and great though temperate and well-reasoned as is my respect for Judges, reasons born of some measure of familiarity with them—I see no reason for the importation of a legal luminary for the determination of that question. The Bill enables the Estates Commissioners to acquire any land for the limited purposes of the Bill. We have to appreciate what the limited purposes of the Bill are. They are the reinstatement of those 2,000 scheduled or named persons compulsorily, and to declare any land so acquired to be an estate within the meaning of the Land Purchase Act. Let it be understood that the object is to reinstate these persons as purchasers under the operation of the Land Purchase Act of 1903. "The purposes of the Bill" therefore means the provision of suitable parcels of land for evicted tenants to whom this Act applies and who have already been described in previous legislation, who—or, in order to make it perfectly exact, whose predecessors—were evicted from their holdings before the passing of the Act of 1903 who have made application to the Estates Commissioners before 1st May, 1907, to be put in occupation of holdings, and whom these Commissioners considered fit and proper persons to become purchasers under the Land Purchase Act; and it also means the provision of parcels of land for new tenants to whom the Bill applies, that is to say, for tenants (and persons nominated as the personal representatives of tenants) of holdings formerly occupied by evicted tenants to whom this Act applies. This power compulsorily to acquire land presents no difficulties except as to its value, when it is untenanted land; but what of the cases when the holding is in the occupation of a new tenant? Here we are upon difficult ground, I admit. All the Plan of Campaign estates inquired into by the Evicted Tenants Commission have practically been settled except two—the Clanricarde estate and the Lewis estate, both in county Galway. In regard to both these estates all efforts at a settlement have proved futile. On the Clanricarde estates there were 126 evicted tenants, and on the Lewis estate I think the number was thirty-five. Were we to say that in no circumstances whatsoever can we by the exercise of compulsory powers reinstate an evicted tenant in his old holding we should practically be proclaiming the impossibility of effecting a final settlement of this question. For it is just in the very cases where equity would most demand the restoration of the tenant that we should find ourselves debarred from decreeing justice. What, therefore, we propose is that no tenanted land should be acquired compulsorily unless it is in the occupation of a new tenant to whom this Bill applies, and unless the Estates Commissioners, having regard to all the circumstances of the case, holding, and district, and to the cost involved, consider it expedient that the evicted tenant should be reinstated as a purchaser of that land; and before any such reinstatement can be carried out, not only must the Estates Commissioners consider it expedient so to do, but they must have offered to put the new tenant forthwith into possession of a parcel of land subject to an annuity under the Land Purchase Acts not exceeding in amount the rent payable for the holding, and, if he is dissatisfied with that parcel of land, the Estates Commissioners shall, after giving him an opportunity of being heard, award such sum as appears to them to be full compensation for his interest in the holding in the same manner as if the holding had been resumed by the landlord under the powers conferred in Section 5 of the Land Act of 1881. Nor shall the tenant to whom compensation has been awarded be compelled to quit his holding until the amount of compensation due to him has been paid or deposited in the promised manner. Under these provisions, therefore, no new tenant can be required to withdraw from his holding unless the Estates Commissioners think, in all the circumstances of the case, it is necessary that he should be required so to withdraw, and he is to be offered land on as good terms as his existing holding; or, if he does not wish land, full compensation is to be paid him. I do not want now to go into the particulars I have at hand with regard to many of these new tenants, but I may safely say that in a great many of the cases they cannot be described as *bona fide* tenants at all. They are mere caretakers of the landlords, who have entirely failed to do justice to these holdings. Evidence of this kind will be forthcoming if demanded. The general machinery of the Bill may be shortly stated as follows:—The Estates Commissioners publish a notice in the *Dublin Gazette* as to the land they want, calling upon any persons interested in the land within a prescribed period to give a statement of the grounds of their objection. The notice will be served on all persons known or believed to be interested. After publication of the notice, the Commissioners may enter upon the land to do whatever is necessary for the purpose of enabling them to determine whether the land is suitable and to form some estimate of the price they are to name. If it appears to the Estates Commissioners, after considering the Report of their inspectors, and after considering any objections to the acquisition of the land, that the land is suitable and that no valid objection has been raised, they may make an offer; and after having made such offer they give notice in a prescribed manner to everybody interested in the land of their intention to acquire it at the named price. Unless, within a limited period, a petition is presented against the acquisition of the land, the land will be acquired without further inquiry. If no petition is presented, therefore, no difficulty arises. If a petition is presented, and is not withdrawn, the petition and all questions arising thereon, subject to the provisions of Section 23 of the Act of 1903 in respect of questions of law, will be heard and determined by the Estates Commissioners, or any two of them, and their decision shall be final and conclusive. That is a sufficient statement for the present purpose of the machinery of the Bill. Considerable expense will have to be incurred in equipping the untenanted land for the evicted tenant when reinstated. Already under Clause 12 of the Land Act, 1903, the Land Commission when reinstating evicted tenants have been able to execute such works as in their opinion were expedient, and to charge them upon the reserve fund established under the Act of 1891. This reserve fund is now represented by a sum of £202,000 in Consols, worth about £175,000 of cash. The Bill proposes that all expenses incurred by the Estates Commissioners under Section 12 of the Act of 1903—that is to say, in equipment—and also all expense incurred in compensation to planters, will be paid out of the reserve fund until it is exhausted and afterwards out of the Land Commission Vote. There is another provision, because we have to bear in mind that the value given by the Estates Commission to the land may in some cases be more than can reasonably be charged to the tenant by way of the purchase annuity, and therefore permissson may be given in some cases—I hope not in many—to the Lord-Lieutenant to enable the Commissioners to incur loss in reselling land, and the amount of that loss we propose shall be paid out of the Land Purchase Aid Fund. That fund is established by Section 47 of the Act of 1893, and is available under Section 48 for the purpose of inducing owners to sell land by paying to them an additional 12 per cent. on their purchase money. We also, of course, take powers to enable the Commissioners to sell any surplus land which may remain on their hands which they cannot dispose of in the manner contemplated by the Act. Power is also taken to secure to the Estates Commissioners a tenure somewhat different from that which they now have; but a sum will be borne on the Parliamentary Vote in order that their conduct can from time to time be called under review.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman what fund will be used for the purpose of equipment after the reserve fund standing at £175,000 is exhausted?

*MR. BIRRELL: When that has been exhausted the money will be paid out of the Parliamentary Vote which goes to meet the cost of the Land Commission. The other clauses will be found in the Bill, but I think they are of a machinery nature, and simply by way of protection against possible unnecessary alarm. I do not want to make a personal appeal to the House. I have been most unfortunate as a legislator. I ask for no consideration for myself—a subject on which, I believe, I am as completely indifferent as any man can be. But in this matter I own I do think that the House should come if it can to the assistance of anybody who happens to be Chief Secretary for Ireland at the moment, not to share the burden, which, happily for themselves, they cannot do, but at all events to lighten it. The state of affairs in the West of Ireland at present is somewhat gloomy. Rain is falling pitilessly, the turf, on the sale of which the happiness and means of many of these peasants depends, lies rotting, the seaweed which they have laboriously collected for the purpose of manure, as Sir Henry Robinson has just informed me, is as wet as on the day it came out of the sea, and the outlook is dismal and gloomy enough. I am satisfied that some such measure as this would, at all events, be taken by that population as a measure of good faith and good feeling, and I do hope that every one who takes part in the discussion of this matter will feel that he is happy that he is called on to assist and hold out a helping hand to put an end to this state of things. A measure of this sort, I honestly believe, will help to bind up many a well-nigh broken heart, and in some measure to staunch the bleeding wound. At all events, those of us who feel able to support this measure through its passage may feel certain that their own winter firesides will be all the brighter by their efforts, and that the roof-trees of their own homes, which probably are not half as dear to them as the cabin of the Irish peasant is to him, will stand all the faster.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to facilitate the provision of land for certain evicted tenants in Ireland, and for other purposes connected therewith; and to make provision with respect to the tenure of office by the Estates Commissioners."—(*Mr. Birrell.*)

MR. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.): The speech the right hon. Gentleman has just made in introducing the Bill is in itself, I think, a sufficient justification for the view that a measure of this kind, not only extremely complicated, but, as the right hon. Gentleman himself evidently thinks, of the greatest possible importance, ought not to have been introduced under the system which permits of only one brief speech on each side, and makes an inquiry as to the details of the Bill very difficult and further debate impossible. The right hon. Gentleman in his allusions to the past history of the evicted tenants question went a little further than he was entitled to do in regard to the view taken by the present Leader of the Opposition and some of those who have preceded him in his office, because the references they have made, to which he made passing allusion, were to the tenants on what were known as the Plan of Campaign Estates, which are given in the Report as seventeen in number, and in regard to which fifteen have already been dealt with, leaving only two outstanding. The Report is only a short one, and though we only received it yesterday I have done my best to make myself master of it. But I can find nothing in it which justifies the view put forward by the right hon. Gentleman that the number arrived at—2,000—is one which may be regarded with any confidence as a final number. The Commissioners gave rather briefly the process by which they had arrived at that number. I should have been glad if the right hon. Gentleman had been able, in answer to questions which have been addressed to him in the last week or two, to tell us something more of the actual inquiries which have been made into the applicants and as to the facts in the case of the tenants who have already been reinstated. We have heard in more than one quarter that some of those who have been reinstated have already taken advantage of their position practically to make their future an impossible one, and that a not inconsiderable number of those included in the 2,000 are men of whom it is perfectly well known that they have failed previously in their agricultural occupations and in regard to whom there is very little reason to believe that if they are restarted they will have a more prosperous future than the fate they have had in the past. I refer to these two points because they have an important bearing upon the eloquent appeal which the Chief Secretary made at the end of his speech. He has appealed to all those who found it possible to do so to support him in his work of healing a sore in Ireland. He told us he believed there was a necessity for this Bill, and that it would have beneficent results. In the absence of the information I have referred to, and of any direct statement as to the people who are included in the 2,000, it is impossible for anybody with any past experience of agrarian movements in Ireland to believe that, if we give the sanction of Parliament to these compulsory powers nominally for the provision only of those 2,000, it will be possible for any Minister or Government to stop there. The 2,000 will grow as rapidly as the 700 has already grown into 2,000. It is only the other day that gentlemen talking about this question with knowledge and figures before them spoke of the number of men they were to deal with as 500, 600, or 700. It has grown already to 2,000, Everybody knows perfectly well that, however we may safeguard ourselves now and however careful the Chief Secretary may be to indicate that the Bill is only intended to apply to this limited number of cases, we shall not be able to stop, but shall be driven to extend the privileges to others. It is impossible within the limits of a short speech to have explained to us a Bill of this kind in such a way that anybody, however familiar with Irish procedure and Irish legislation, will be able to follow it completely. One thing is perfectly clear—it is a new procedure of compulsory acquisition of land. I am not going to dispute the question of compulsion. I can conceive circumstances in which compulsion may be absolutely necessary, but such circumstances have to be established and the Report has not established them. The Chief Secretary has called attention to Clauses 40 and 41, but I have read the Report twice and must declare that there is nothing in it to justify compulsion. Nothing has been said in the Chief Secretary's speech to justify the compulsory powers. Is it to be suggested that we are to give compulsory powers for this special purpose because in two cases only the present policy has failed, and is it to attain success in those two cases that the compulsory powers are to be granted? I am conscious of the fact that I have already spoken longer than I ought to, but the difficulties of the procedure to be adopted are so great that it is impossible to cover them within the limits of a short speech. Does the Bill give any appeal against the Estates Commissioners, and, if so, to whom? The right hon. Gentleman has told us there is it to be a petition; is to be a petition to the Estates Commissioners against their own order? If so, it is hardly a valuable provision to insert in the Bill. With regard to the finance, we are to be met in the first place by the reserve fund, and, secondly, by the annual vote of the Estates Commissioners. I should be glad to know the real sum. The Chief Secretary makes his appeal to us that this sore may be removed from Ireland, but I do not consider that the employment of compulsory powers has been justified. It is neither reasonable nor fair to hand the people over to the Estates Commissioners. The primary duty of the Estates Commissioners is to buy the land in order to resell it, and is it fair to give them absolute discretion as to what land they are to apply the compulsory powers to? The right hon. Gentleman has mentioned equipment. That is a very important consideration, for the cost of equipment has risen in some cases to between £400 and £500. When we add to that the value of the fee simple, the cost is such that it is very difficult for any part of it to be repaid. We have already enough difficulty in regard to holdings in Ireland, but I believe that without justification we are adopting a new procedure which will fail and create fresh difficulties, and make the settlement of the land question in Ireland more difficult than it is at present.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Birrell, Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland, and Mr. T. W. Russell.

EVICTED TENANTS (IRELAND) BILL.

"To facilitate the provision of land for certain evicted tenants in Ireland, and for other purposes connected therewith; and to make provision with respect to the tenure of office by the Estates Commissioners," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 258.]

SUPPLY [14TH ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1907–8. CLASS II.

Motion made, and Question proposed "That a sum, not exceeding £184,484, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1908, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade and Subordinate Departments."

*SIR F. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.) said he wished to elicit some further and decisive statement from his right hon. friend with regard to railway rates and charges made to the trading public. He was invited to introduce to his right hon. friend during the last twelve months two very important deputations. In regard to the first, dealing with owner's risk notes and the failure of the railway companies to grant fair alternative rates, a Bill was brought in to deal with the matter, and therefore he would not refer to it further except to express the hope that in the event of that Bill not passing his right hon. friend would hold out some hopes of the question being dealt with in the near future. The second deputation had reference to a combination, initiated in the last year or two, which culminated in a specific agreement between the railway companies in the month of January last, a combination which apparently had for its aim and object an agreement which operated compulsorily on the various companies not to continue to grant to the traders of the country the customary rebates which had been given from time to time purely as the result of a wholesome and healthy growth of competition. The preliminary objection which he took to the agreements that had been arrived at between the railway companies was that they were absolutely secret and inaccessible to the traders of the country. If the traders could obtain accurate details of the charges imposed upon them and the reason for those charges and their disintegration into their separate items, the Board of Trade could put into operation powers in existing Acts which would enable the traders to a certain extent to obtain from the Board of Trade or the railway companies such protection as was necessary. But that was extremely difficult. The policy which seemed to have been arrived at was the withdrawal of the agreements by the railway companies from the knowledge of traders and a determination upon their part to restrain the agents of the companies who were inclined to obtain business by the ordinary method of competition, namely, a reduction of the rate in the districts served by other companies, and to enforce on traders the full rates. The result of the agreements had been to drive up all the rates to the maximum and to deprive the traders of those concessions which they had originally obtained through the competition of the companies. He saw in this the beginning of a combination of irresistible capitalism to control the interests of trade solely in the interests of vast groups of capital such as President Roosevelt had been opposing with splendid vigour in the interests of the general trading public of the United States. He urged the President of the Board of Trade in the same way to check this policy of secret, illicit, and illegal combination now at its inception. The traders only knew that the rebates and concessions which they had enjoyed for years had been withdrawn, and that rates were being screwed up to the highest point which the Acts of the companies enabled them to charge. What they said was that the railway companies were adopting a secret policy of consolidation, and of endeavouring to withdraw themselves from the control of Parliament and the Board of Trade, as well as to obtain the advantages of amalgamation without coming to Parliament, and thus giving an opportunity of fair conditions being imposed, and they were thus depriving the traders of the opportunity of obtaining the protection that they required. He asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he could not, under the powers he had got, insist on fuller publicity and accessibility being given to the items of railway rates. The right hon. Gentleman would recognise that he had some power in his hands to check the proceedings of the railway companies, although he freely admitted that more power would have to be given to him to deal thoroughly with the evil. What they asked was that power should be given to obtain the publication of and accessibility to the agreements between the railway companies, in order to enable traders to see how far, under the arrangements imposed upon them, they were being deprived of the advantages given under the Act of 1894. The whole of this policy was animated with and illustrated by the policy of the railway companies. Clauses had been introduced into nearly all their Bills recently in order to obtain practically a monopoly of the cartage in connection with railway traffic. He might just allude to some facts which had recently come before the Royal Commission in regard to this question of cartage, and about the withdrawal of proper information about the rates and their details. It had been established on a number of facts that the rebates granted by railway companies to traders who did their own cartage themselves or through competing carrier firms were now considerably less than the amount of the charges made by the companies themselves as shown in the items of their station to station rates in respect of cartage services which the railway companies rendered themselves. They therefore wanted greater accessibility to the items of those rates, and he would ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he could not, under the existing Acts, adopt machinery and take steps which would enable him to check that course of conduct. He was informed that in some cases the rebates given were actually only half the charges which were imposed under the collection and delivery rates. That was a very serious thing. It was practically destroying competition, and setting up a preferential system by the railway companies who misused the powers given them by their Acts. The traders of the country would be deeply grateful to his right hon. friend if he signalised the holding of his office by checking this great abuse, and by securing what, he believed, was always the case in other countries, that they should have absolute access to the details of the railway charges, so that the traders might know exactly where they were in respect of all these questions. They asked that the right hon. Gentleman should employ, in regard to the railway companies, some of the same policy, some of the same reasoning which he had so wisely and properly adopted in respect of the wrong and oppressive covenants and agreements in force under the provisions of the Patent Acts which he was remedying in the present session. He invited the right hon. Gentleman to exercise his administrative powers as President of the Board of Trade to deal with this question in the same spirit as that in which he was dealing with the provisions of the Patent Acts. If he found that his powers were insufficient to enable him to deal with the established and recognised grievances of the traders, created by this unfair exercise of the powers of the railway companies, the right hon. Gentleman should not shrink from coming forward to obtain the fullest powers to deal with the evils.

*SIR CHARLES McLAREN (Leicestershire, Bosworth) said that everybody connected with the commercial interests of the country would cordially congratulate his right hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade on the way in which he had administered his Department. He had never heard any complaint against him, and he had handled with tact and discretion the questions which had been left to his administration. Among other matters, he would like to refer to the speech which the right hon. Gentleman made at the opening of the latest tube railway in reference to the position of the Board of Trade as regarded railway questions. Great interest had been excited of late, partly through the Board of Trade, and partly through the Press, on a great many of these questions, and his hon. friend the Member for Northamptonshire had voiced the views, no doubt well founded, of a large section of the community. There was, however, a feeling that railway shareholders were being attacked by all classes of the community; that they were being attacked by the officials of the Board of Trade, and that they were being attacked by the public, who wished to have greater facilities at lower prices; and they had also been the object, which he did not at all condemn, of the very able and temperate appeal of the Member for Derby on behalf of the railway employees. He was quite sure that railway directors were not hostile to any of these classes. They were anxious to do what they could for the public, and they were more than anxious to do what they could for their employees. He saw that his right hon. friend, in receiving a deputation, stated that he was communicating with the various interests, and that he would not fail to bear them in mind. But there was one condition which was essential before the railway companies could do anything, and that was that they must have the money with which to satisfy demands. They must be placed in a position by which they could not only earn more money, but obtain more capital. The right hon. Gentleman was very well advised when he told the public that any legislation proposed by the Board of Trade, or any of their administrative Acts, would not be such as to frighten the investing public from putting their money into these securities. He hoped as far as the Board of Trade was concerned that there would be no encouragement given to any proposal for a reduction of rates or fares, so long as the public were making these demands upon railway directors. He for one would be very glad if the railway companies could increase the wages of their employees and reduce their hours, provided the public were willing to give them a reasonably increased revenue by submitting to a reasonable increase in the railway fares. The question of shipping had been handled by his right hon. friend. This had been for years one of the most delicate questions with which the House had had to deal. There was nothing but praise for the manner in which the President of the Board of Trade had consulted all the interests concerned, by which means he had succeeded in settling a large number of questions not only important to the traders, but to the shipowners of the country — questions of a quasi-international character, questions which had to be settled in order to put our shipowners in as reasonable a position in British ports as ships sailing under the flags of foreign Powers. His right hon. friend had settled all those questions, and he had never heard anyone give him anything but praise. He wished to say a word about the Blue-books which were issued by the Board of Trade and which contained a valuable amount of information on our current commercial position. He hoped his right hon. friend would continue to publish what was called the Fiscal Blue-book, and he thought the staff of the Department could not give too much attention to the elaboration of the figures and analyses of the Returns. It must be the feeling on both sides of the House that the Reports ought to be of a strictly impartial character: that was to say, they should not be used purely for the promotion of views about free trade on the one hand and what was called fiscal reform on the other. They ought plainly to state the facts and leave to the common sense and intelligent criticism of the public the application of those facts and figures in support of or in opposition to the views then under discussion. In addition to those Blue-books there was issued every month a valuable White-book containing the Board of

Trade Returns of foreign trade. He thought that might be made more intelligible to the ordinary trader. In the first place there was not a good classification of our exports. They would find among the heads "steel and iron" exports, which included an enormous variety of goods for export, agricultural machinery, steam engines, textile machinery, and a number of other descriptions of articles; but what was required was a more elaborate sub-division or classification of those goods in order to make the Returns more useful to traders. If they turned to the countries to which our goods were exported, he was surprised that more attention had not been given to the matter. Canada, our premier Colony, for instance, in a large number of the references was actually not mentioned at all, but was simply grouped under the head of "other countries." That was absurd, at a time when so much attention was being devoted to Colonial interests, and when Canada herself was doing all she could to secure in Canada British interests instead of American interests. He thought it was absurd that the official returns should make no mention of Canada at all, but that she should be grouped with such countries as Monte Video and Uruguay. When they turned to Australia, no information at all as to the several Colonies was given. He thought they ought to have in the case of each country, however unimportant it might be, and of each Colony, a proper statement where that was possible. One other fault he had to find with the White-book had reference to the system by which the value of exports and imports was stated. The value of exports was given f.o.b., that was "free on board" at the port of export; but the imports were entered at the price at which they arrived, and not f.o.b. at the port from which they had been exported, which meant that commission, freight, and insurance were added to the price. That was a totally misleading set of figures. The real value of goods was not what it was on board ship at Cardiff or Liverpool but their value at the port of destination. They were sold to a merchant in the foreign ports and the price of the freight and insurance should be added. The system adopted was not the right way of dealing with these figures, and whatever rule was adopted it should be similar in each case. The present method made the value of the export trade less and the import trade apparently much greater than it really was, and those fallacies gave rise to wrong deductions. One half of the revenue obtained from shipping freights, insurance, and merchants' profits was excluded from the Blue-books. Although the Consular Reports published by the Foreign Office did not come within the scope of the Board of Trade, he believed the powers of that Department were wide enough to enable his right hon. friend to take some steps to assist British commerce abroad. If a Vote was asked for this purpose he felt sure it would be granted, and then the right hon. Gentleman could establish Board of Trade agents to take the place of the Foreign Consular agents, who were of very little use to British traders. They were often of German nationality and they did not take up the case of the British trader in the way the German representatives did. The right hon. Gentleman would do a great service to British trade if he would institute some system of trained commercial agents, thoroughly acquainted with foreign languages and commerce, to represent this country abroad. They wanted a class of men who would not turn up their noses at tradesmen and who would be prepared to put their shoulder to the wheel to further British trade. In spite of all drawbacks this country had succeeded in building up a splendid foreign trade. For the month of May only, our imports had increased by over £5,000,000, and our exports by over £9,000,000, as compared with 1905. This year for a period of five months our imports had increased £51,000,000 and our exports £43,000,000, of which £35,000,000 were manufactured goods. That meant an enormous prosperity in the trade of the country. It should be noted that this was trade carried on in a legitimate way, without any undue forcing up of prices, and resting upon a solid foundation, although we could not hope to always maintain prices at their present level. There was no reason, however, to suppose that we were on the eve of any very great slump such as had been witnessed in years gone by, due to speculative movements which had rushed up prices to a point which they had never reached before and ought never to have reached. With regard to raw material, of iron ore we imported during the same period 153,000 tons as against 123,000 tons. That spoke volumes for the prosperity of the iron trade. The increase in the imports of wool was £21,000,000 as against £14,000,000; hides 197,000 cwts. as against 145,000 cwts.; boots and shoes £800,000 as against £700,000; and hosiery and thread, which so largely affected the Midlands, £39,000,000 as against £33,000,000. Cotton exports amounted to £45,000,000 as against £37,000,000. Those figures showed that we were enjoying a trade boom, and this was particularly the case in the coal, coke, iron, and steel trades. The woollen and worsted trades showed £14,000,000 against £12,000,000, whilst coal and coke for the period of five months this year showed an export trade of 25,000,000 as against 19,000,000 tons two years ago. As for value the price received was exactly one-half more than the price received two years ago. What was true of our foreign trade was equally true of our home trade. When they got the figures of the census of production they would have something definite to go upon. There was no doubt that the consumption of goods by the working-classes and the middle classes in this country never was so great as to-day, and the working men of France, Germany, and Italy compared very unfavourably with English workmen as consumers of home products. As regarded fuel, clothing, furniture, and luxuries the English workman consumed more than the working man of any other country in the world except the United States of America, and employment and wages had never before been so continuously good as during the last three or four years. He desired to congratulate the Labour Party upon the way they had handled the difficult problems arising out of disputes between employers and employed. The establishment of a Conciliation Board had been of enormous value to our trade. In this way disputes had been prevented, more especially in the coal mining industry, and that had given confidence to coal owners, enabled them to sell forward, and permitted buyers to buy without fear of a stoppage of the collieries and the disastrous consequences which always followed strikes and lock-outs. They had now established a system which for a long time to come would enable them to settle these disputes in a business-like way. The result had been an enormous output of coal and an enormous increase in our export of coal to foreign countries. Some people looked upon that as not being any sign of prosperity and argued that it was wasting our national resources. But coal was one of the most highly manufactured articles produced in this country. It had no raw material behind it which had to be paid for; the only raw material was really the royalty which had to be paid to the landlords. In that respect it was not like cotton or the leather used in the shoe-making trade. In the case of coal it was labour from first to last, and, what was more, it was highly paid and mostly skilled labour. Out of every shilling spent on coal no less than 10d. went in the shape of wages. Therefore it was an enormous advantage to this country to maintain and increase our exports of coal. Those engaged in coal getting and the skilled men about the engine boilers and machinery connected with mining had been earning incomes which, for the last two years, had been steadier than they had ever been before. There was nothing that made more for the prosperity of England than the high price and the large exports of coal. There was no fear of the exhaustion of our coal supply; the Report of the Royal Commission which inquired into that question had put an end to all doubts on that subject. At the present rate of output there was a sufficient stock of coal to last for hundreds of years, and what they had to fear more than exhausting the coal supply was that coal might not be such a necessary article in the near future. They would probably find other forms of fuel taking the place of coal, and therefore he strongly advised the people of this country to get out of the bowels of the earth every ton of coal they could whilst the sun was shining on the coal trade. Coal was of no value at the bottom of a mine, but every ton of coal brought to the top represented 10s., which might be invested in works of public necessity, such as railways, bridges, and houses, and in that way they could turn the coal into a permanent source of profit for all generations to come. Therefore he hoped that no one would go away with the idea that the prosperity of the coal trade was in any way an injurious factor to the prosperity of the country. It should not be forgotten that we owed much of our present prosperity to the prosperity of Germany and the United States. Those who read about this subject in some newspapers were rather inclined to think that because Germany and the United State were prosperous in trade that fact necessarily injured the trade of Great Britain. The real fact of the case, however, was that when Germany and America enjoyed good trade they were amongst our very best customers, and the high price of iron was due to the fact that Germany and United States, in spite of protective tariffs were bound to take our iron and steel in very large quantities. On the other hand, when Germany and the United States had bad trade they tried to under-sell us. He was not going into that question at present, but he would point out that it was important for ensuring the prosperity of our trade that there should also be prosperity in foreign countries which, in spite of their tariffs, must be amongst our best customers. There were large questions in connection with the trade of the country which, after all, were far above fiscal disputes, and he hoped that the President of the Board of Trade would maintain the attitude of fairness to all sections of the community—labour on the one hand and capital on the other—which he had hitherto shown, and which he was certain must appeal to the sympathy of all interested in the commercial and industrial welfare of the country.

*MR WARDLE (Stockport) said he could not entirely assent to some of the statements made by the hon. Member for the Bosworth Division in his interesting speech. He was not quite sure that either the traders or the railway employees would agree with the statement that an increase in the rates and fares was the only way by which prosperity could be restored. There were other ways, but he did not propose entering into them at present. He desired to call attention to two matters in connection with the practical administration of the Board of Trade. The first was the question of accidents on railways. He was pleased to notice that the enforcement of the Acts already in existence had had some effect in reducing the number of accidents on railways both to railway servants and the general public. That was striking testimony to the fact that legislation in this direction had been in the interest of the whole community. In 1875, when the railway employees numbered 250,000 and the traffic was very much less than now, there were 765 employees killed and 3,618 injured in the movement of vehicles, while in 1904, when the employees numbered 578,000, there were only 416 killed and 4,243 injured, although the traffic had at least doubled in the interval. A matter calling for attention in regard to this subject was the form of the return in which these accidents were reported. It included those only resulting from collisions and the movement of vehicles and did not provide for the inclusion of certain other accidents, which, consequently, were never included in the totals made up by the Board of Trade. In 1904, for instance, of servants employed in warehouses and other places there were 32 killed and 10,590 injured. These accidents ought to be shown in the returns. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would arrange for the issue of forms in future which would show the whole of the accidents, and not simply those resulting from the movement of vehicles. The locomotives, carriages, and waggons on the railways in this country numbered 811,044, and 52,322 miles of single track and sidings, but at present there was not adequate provision for the inspection of the rolling stock and permanent way by Government inspectors. Accidents did sometimes result from the fact that engines and waggons were not properly looked after and repaired. Attention should be given to this point by the Board of Trade. There were at present only ten inspectors to do the whole of the work, and obviously it was impossible for them to see that all necessary precautions were taken. In connection with the Home Office there were 165 inspectors of factories, forty inspectors of mines, and four inspectors of explosives, and, taking these figures into consideration, it appeared to him that a larger number of Board of Trade inspectors should be employed to look after railway matters. While he was glad there had been a progressive improvement, he thought something might still be done to reduce the toll of life which was annually paid in connection with the working of railways. The returns showed that accidents increased when there was a boom in trade. He believed that was due to the longer hours the men were employed in dealing with the traffic. He did not say that was the only cause, but certainly it was one of the causes. He wished to know whether the right hon. Gentleman could state what had been the result of his inquiries into the matter of long hours. On the 6th March when the subject was debated in this House certain promises were made, but personally he was convinced that the President of the Boare of Trade would not find a full solution of the difficulty with the administrative powers he at present possessed. Referring to superannuation funds for railway servants, he pointed out that there were sixteen of these funds, including that in connection with the Railway Clearing House. The funds were established by Act of Parliament and membership was compulsory. While he had not a word to say against the motives of those who promoted the funds, he wished to state that some inquiry into the management and control was necessary, for the benefits varied as much as between 60 and 100 per cent. Some of these were guaranteed; some were paid on the average salary of the whole service of the men: and some were paid on the average of the last seven years of service. One railway company had changed its payments to its annuitants no less than three times. When the railway companies were forced by Act of Parliament to make an actuarial valuation of their funds it was found that they were practically insolvent. What he proposed was that there should be a Committee of Inquiry to establish uniformity, so that every person employed by a railway company should pay the same contribution and have an equal benefit under the Act. This matter affected 85,000 persons. Certain manipulations of these funds had gone on from time to time. When they were originally established there was a periodical actuarial valuation, but that ceased to be made, the one exception being the London and South Western Railway Company, which had started their fund on a life annuity basis. But in 1896 there was a clamour amongst the employees of the L. & N. W. Co. for an increase of their pensions. An actuarial investigation was made, and the report of the actuaries stated that there was not sufficient surplus over to give any additional pensions. And what happened? A committee which was appointed, largely from the chief officers of the company, decided to increase the pensions by 50 per cent., and as a consequence the fund was subsequently declared to be insolvent to the extent of over a million. The company had therefore to come to Parliament for a remedy for that state of matters. It was so with almost every one of these railway funds; they had been declared to be actuarially insolvent. It was part of the provision of the Act that the funds should be valued from time to time and that any deficit should be made good by the railway company. But the pensions had been increased in the case of the London and North Western Railway Company and the Caledonian Company at the instigation of the higher officials—many of whom had been given pensions calculated on the average of their salaries during their last seven years of service instead of over the whole period of their service. It was that which had caused such a drain on the funds. As an illustration there was the case of an officer in the Clearing House Fund who, after twenty-nine years membership of the fund, would have had a pension under the old scale of £953, but under the revised scale, calculating the salary during the last seven years of service, his pension was increased to £2,497, or an increase of 162 per cent. But that did not apply to all classes of men. Chief clerks, for instance, whose average salary was £193, under the old scale got a pension of £93, and under the new scale £100, or an increase of only 17 per cent. He believed that there was a maximum in regard to pensions in the Great Eastern and Great Northern Railway Companies' funds. What he wanted was that under these funds every employee under all the railway companies should be treated on a fair and equitable basis. It was, he contended, the duty of the Board of Trade to see that that was so. In many cases the railway companies were shifting the future liability for pensions to their employees when the existing funds were exhausted on to the shareholders. Therefore, for the protection of the shareholders as well as of the directors themselves, these funds should be thoroughly examined and put on a reasonable and sound basis. He trusted that the Committee of Inquiry would be established.

MR. SEDDON (Lancashire, Newton) said he wanted to join in the chorus of praise to the right hon. Gentleman for the courtesy with which he had answered the many Questions put to him. Some twelve or eighteen months ago it was his duty to bring under the right hon. Gentleman's notice the conditions of the watchmaking trade. Both the public and the local manufacturers were at the mercy of unscrupulous foreign manufacturers, and he was glad that certain anomalies and injustices in the trade had been removed. There were two Acts of Parliament which affected their trade — the Mercantile Marks Act and the Sale of Hall-marked Goods Act; but there was no machinery to put those Acts into operation. He had watched carefully, but could not find a single penny was being used for the employment of inspectors to see that those Acts were properly administered. He believed that the President of the Board of Trade was anxious that those Acts of Parliament should be enforced in the interest both of the British public and of British manufacturers. Thousands of watches were sold annually under misdescription, and at present there was no one whose duty it was to protect the public against that fraud. He asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he could not see his way to appoint five inspectors —two for England, one for Scotland, one for Wales, and one for Ireland—to inspect places where gold and silver was sold. He did not know of any trade where there was so much fraud carried on as in the watch and jewellery trade, especially in connection with foreign imported goods. It was important that that trade should not be lost to this country, as such loss would be a calamity not only to our native manufacturers, but to the public at large. He maintained that by administering existing Acts of Parliament by ordinary methods the trade could be preserved to this country without any change in our fiscal policy. He was supported in that view by most of the chambers of commerce throughout the country—including the Chamber of Commerce of Coventry, the centre of the watch industry. He was not there to give a blessing on behalf of tariff reformers, but he thanked the right hon. Gentleman for attempting to do something in the interests of justice. He had a strong suspicion when he heard the chorus of praise of the tariff reformers that the right hon. Gentleman was in danger from it. He thought to himself, "Woe unto you that all men speak well of," but he supposed this was the exception which proved the rule, and that the right hon. Gentleman was really guarding the interests of those engaged in the watch trade. The amount of fraud in the jewellery trade could be tested by hon. Members if they would walk down the Strand and look into the auction rooms. They would hear there watches described as of gold and silver which had no hall mark at all. This resulted in great injustice to the public, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would see the urgency of dealing with this question. The Merchandise Marks Act was being used as a blind in order to defeat the intentions with which it was passed. He instanced the case of Swiss watches. The words "made in Switzerland" were very often so engraved that one would have to have a magnifying glass to distinguish them, and they could easily be erased.

SIR J. BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich) said he wished to associate himself with the praise which had been given to the President of the Board of Trade. During the time the right hon. Gentleman had been in office he had shown imagination, sympathy, and courage, and what he had done had met with the strongest approval from the business community of the country. He desired now to encourage the right hon. Gentleman to take even a larger and bolder view of his duties, and he was led to do so by some words which fell from the Prime Minister when he last spoke at Plymouth, "the end we hold before us, that is to say the development of the resources of our own country to the utmost possible extent." He hoped the Prime Minister used those words after consultation with his colleagues, and he welcomed the declaration with intense pleasure. The right hon. Gentleman was the first Prime Minister who had ever made such a declaration. He (Sir J. Brunner) was not one of those who were afraid of a policy because it was new, and he did not believe they ought to condemn the Government for introducing any scheme which was for the benefit of the country. In regard to old age pensions, security of tenure for farmers, and the amendment of the land laws, they would have his warmest support. They were now discussing the Board of Trade Estimates, and it was before that body that the consideration of these subjects would come. In the course of his recent tour with other representatives of this country on the continent he found that every other country gave the greatest attention to the development of the national resources as one of the objects of national policy. The same object was pursued in our own Colonies, and in his opinion it was the duty of statesmen to prosecute it. An objection was taken to the guarantee of the loan of £5,000,000 to the Transvaal, but similar loans had been given to other Colonies for public works. He remembered that he was called to order by the late Speaker when, referring to the Uganda railway, he said he was sick of this country spending money in all quarters of the world when we could not find money enough for own people. What we had done for our Colonies it seemed to him that we ought to do for our own people. As a result the Colonies had constructed their own railways, and their national debts were to a large extent represented by growing assets. During his visit with other Members of both Houses, including Lords Avebury and Brassey, to France, in December, 1903, he was interested to learn in Paris that the Credit Lyonnais drew up for the benefit of its customers a balance sheet of every civilised country, so that they might judge of their rentability, to use a French word. They heard, and it was a remarkable fact, that this country was the only one in the world which had no assets to set against the debt. That was, however, hardly correct, because in that calculation only the dead weight debt was dealt with. But, after all, the local loans debt against which we had assets was a mere flea-bite compared with the total debt, and therefore the statement was quite justified. He would support the Government if, in order to provide for public works, they pursued with courage the new policy of adding to our debt. It would be a wholesome and economic policy, because it would result in greatly increasing our national prosperity. Prussia's ownership of the railways had been the most potent means in the production of her national prosperity. The last country which they visited was Prussia, and the prosperity of that country during the forty-six years he had been watching it had filled him with admiration, and of late years he confessed with terror. He did not want this country to be beaten by Prussia, the United States, or any other country, and therefore he hoped that we might take a lesson from Prussia and mend our ways. Prussia had long considered that the development of the national intellect should be part of the national policy, and he was glad to see that in that matter we were rapidly overtaking that country. He urged the right hon. Gentleman to press forward the inquiries he was making, not only as regarded the purchase of railways, but with regard to all other public works. The cost of the transit of goods was higher in this country than in any other country in the world. He was convinced that if the country was persuaded to adopt the policy which had been shadowed forth by the Prime Minister, especially in the matter of procuring cheaper transit for English goods, it would bring much more prosperity to our manufacturers than any system of so-called moderate import duties.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) said he entirely agreed with what the hon. Baronet had said with reference to the development of the railway resources of the country. We had, in this country, however, no Minister of Public Works, which in his opinion we ought to have. We also ought to have a Minister of Commerce and a Minister of Railways. The President of the Board of Trade practically did all this work of the country and had no consultative committee. He had a Board consisting of himself and permanent officials and a body of gentlemen who never met, and he had therefore only the assistance of the permanent officials. It was extraordinary that in a commercial country like England we should have a Board of Trade that was practically non-existent, when all those countries who were considering these questions in competition with us had consultative Committees and Ministers of Commerce as well. As an Irishman it might be thought peculiar in him to venture to criticise an English Departmen, but he desired to take that opportunity to protest against the whole system of permanent officials, because practically they governed the House. The President of the Board of Trade was sympathetic, and might desire to make some reform, but he was generally hampered by the permanent officials. We certainly ought to have a Railway Minister.

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN said it was not in order to discuss whether there should be a Railway Minister.

MR. FIELD said he was always willing to obey the ruling of the Chair, but he would like to point out that if Mr. Deputy-Chairman was a committeeman he would immediately see that the railways had a great deal to do with the commerce of the country, and therefore he submitted that as they were controlled by the Board of Trade it was competent for an hon. Member to point out that there should be a Minister of Railways and Commerce.

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN said it was not a matter of administration but of legislation, and therefore it was not in order to discuss it.

MR. FIELD said he was not discussing it, he merely made the suggestion. He was strongly in favour of the nationalisation of Irish railways, and he entirely concurred with the observations of the hon. Baronet the Member for Cheshire. He believed that in every country where the railways were nationalised commercial prosperity followed. There was no chance whatever of commercial prosperity in Ireland until the railways were put under different management. The hon. Baronet had spoken of the prosperity of Great Britain—he had not mentioned Ireland—being bound up with the prosperity of Germany and the United States. He had pointed out what was accepted by everybody with a knowledge of commerce, that the prosperity of one country was dependent on the prosperity of another, because unless the various countries were more or less prosperous they could not be customers by going from one country to another, which, of course, was the basis of trade between different nations. He wondered whether it was want of sympathy or of intellect which led hon. Members to talk of the prosperity of Germany, the United States, France, and other countries, while they had never a word as to whether or not there was prosperity in Ireland. Surely, if Ireland were more prosperous it would be better not only for her but for this country. Ireland, moreover, was entitled to greater consideration by reason of the fact that she constituted that portion of the United Kingdom which most relied on the development of her resources for prosperity in the future. The hon. Baronet the Member for Bosworth had stated that to meet the demands made upon them the railway companies wanted more money, and that that could only be obtained by raising the passenger fares. He would tell the hon. Baronet one way in which the railway companies could economise, and that was by cutting down the enormous salaries which the managers and directors received.

SIR F. BANBURY (City of London): No, they do not. The directors have only £400, and in some instances only £300. [AN HON. MEMBER: More than a Member of Parliament.]

MR. FIELD: Yes; more than a Member of Parliament, for Members of that House directed the affairs of the nation for nothing. It was one of the peculiarities of the British Constitution that the only men who were considered not to be worth a salary were the men who directed the affairs of the country. The whole of the railway companies of the three kingdoms were an absolute trust—just as much a trust as the denounced Steel Trust and the Standard Oil Trust in America. Indeed, there was no such trust in existence as that of the railway companies of the three kingdoms. There was £1,300,000,000 of capital in the railway companies of Great Britain, and about £40,000,000 or £50,000,000 in those of Ireland. These companies were one great trust; they met in conference at certain times; they raised the rates to the public, who were powerless against them. At the present moment they had in Great Britain the highest railway rates of any country in the world except Ireland, where they were higher than in England, with the result that in Ireland commerce was greatly handicapped. He could not understand why hon. Gentlemen should talk of tariff reform and protection in face of the fact that the railway companies allowed preferential rates to foreign competitors who brought their goods to this country. He had been a Member of the House for fifteen years, and he served on the Select Committee which inquired into the subject of railway charges and rates. The Committee had reported, but in that House there was an *imperium in imperio*—railway directors and railway shareholders, who would not allow any reform of the railway system to pass through. Ever since then he had been asking questions of various Presidents of the Board of Trade and of Prime Ministers with regard to the preferential rates which the railway companies allowed to foreign competitors. Why was it that the hon. Baronet, and any railway director in that House in favour of fiscal reform, allowed the continuance of this preference to the foreigner? He asked the hon. Baronet and the railway directors in the House to request the President of the Board of Trade to appoint a small Committee to inquire into these preferential rates and to report to the House the facts laid before them. There was no competition between our railway companies; each had what was called its sphere of influence; the country was divided into geographical areas, and the rates were settled by the companies in conference. Another great grievance was that relating to consignments, a grievance particularly felt in the case of the moving of Irish live stock. The Stock Owners' Association, when they wanted a through rate for consignments, were presented by the railway company with a document which recited at length every species of casualty which was likely to occur, in order that the company might be absolved from anything like liability. In the view of many eminent lawyers the document was not a legal one, though it was covered by the term "reasonable," a word most difficult of legal definition. The result in Ireland, according to the witnesses who gave evidence before the Departmental Committee, was the loss of about half a million a year. He hoped that the result of the Viceregal Commission would be the recommendation of the nationalisation of the railways in Ireland. It would be a most useful experiment, and, as the railways in that country now stood, the present was a most suitable occasion for acquiring and nationalising them. If the railways could belong to the State in India there was no reason why they should not belong to the State in Ireland. The hon. Baronet had spoken of preparing the returns of the trade of different countries and Colonies separately. If it was desirable that Canada and the Colonies of Australia should be separately returned, why should not the trade of Ireland also be the subject of a Return separate from that of Great Britain? At present they had no means in Ireland of finding out what were their exports and their imports. They had no separate branch of the Board of Trade for Ireland. He was not advocating a separate Board of Trade for Ireland; they had too many Government Departments already, and he hoped they would be able to manage their own affairs, without any English Department, later on. Another subject on which he desired to offer an observation had reference to speculations in foodstuffs and raw material, or gambling in "futures." He hoped that the President of the Board of Trade, particularly in the case of foodstuffs, would do what he could to prevent this speculation or gambling in "futures" on the Stock Exchange. One hon. Member had stated that owing to the action of the Labour Party, conciliation boards had been formed, with arbitration, which more or less obviated the necessity for strikes. In his opinion it ought not to be the function of the Labour Party to establish those boards of conciliation. He had conversed with an Australian on the subject, and he found that in most other countries it was the Government who organised the boards of conciliation and provided the machinery for arbitration. But this great commercial country was apparently far behind any other country in the world in the provision of such machinery. It seemed to be nobody's business to develop the resources of

England, Scotland, Ireland or Wales. It was left to the President of the Board of Trade, who was an extremely able individual, and had done all he could, but the machinery at his disposal was not sufficient. He trusted that the few points he had mentioned in regard to Ireland would receive consideration. He hoped that the time was coming when in Ireland they would be allowed to do their own business, and when that time came they would apply themselves to the problem of the nationalisation of Irish railways, and thus show this country a useful lesson in economy of expenses.

*MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs) said he desired to draw the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to a small matter affecting the railway facilities in his constituency. As a rule he did not sympathise with the attacks which were made in the House upon the railways, most of which he thought very unreasonable, and he was bringing this question forward in the hope that the President of the Board of Trade might be able to put a word in at the right place, and not by any means in order to attack the Board of the Cambrian Railway, which under difficult circumstances maintained a very fair service, or the very efficient service of the London and North Western Railway. When they had the right hon. Gentleman as President of the Board of Trade naturally they did not expect to have any grievances of any kind left in Wales. He often wondered whether St. George or St. David really was the patron saint of the Principality. Representations, however, had been made to him by tradesmen in Newtown that when they forwarded goods to Liverpool they were often very much delayed on the way. They also complained that when they made claims against the railway company they frequently had good reason to be dissatisfied with the result. The claims made by them as a rule were extremely moderate and yet they had not been able to get satisfaction. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would see that the tradesmen of Newtown were well looked after in this respect in the future. He mentioned specific cases of delay in respect of fish, flowers, and other perishable goods. That was the particular matter about which he wished to press the right hon. Gentleman to intervene for the protection of his constituents. The hon. Member for the Bosworth division had deprecated the idea of the railway fares in London being raised. He wished to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he had any power to force a railway company to carry on its business at a loss. He did not believe that any Government Department possessed any such power. [Cries of "Why not?"] The hon. Member opposite had referred to the amount of capital invested in railways and he had described the different companies as meeting together in secret conclave and making arrangements for the restriction of free competition. If they were really doing that then they were most inefficient people, for they utterly failed to accomplish their object. He found from a Return issued by the Board of Trade that the capital invested in railways in this country in 1905 amounted to £1,282,000,000 and that only £3·27 per cent. was paid as interest on the whole of that capital. Out of thirty-nine companies the stocks of only about nine stood above par, and that was not a record of great prosperity. It seemed to him that they could not expect railway companies to carry passengers or goods at a loss, since they were business, and not charitable, institutions, and considering the amount of capital invested the return was very small indeed. The fact ought not to be overlooked that the proprietors of railway companies were not rich persons, because quite 60 per cent. of the shareholders held less than £500 of stock. Speaker after speaker in this debate had referred to the railway companies as rolling in prosperity, as if they had no competition to face. That, however, was not the case, because competition was very severe, and that was why the return on the capital invested was so exceedingly small. The hon. Member for Chester had referred to the nationalisation of railways, and he had mentioned in this connection that railways in India were State property. No deduction of any sort could be drawn from that in favour of the nationalisation of railways, because the capital in India belonged to Government from the beginning, or when that was not the case interest was guaranteed, and the Indian railways were at once strategic and commercial.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think I must rule out of order the nationalisation of railways, because that is a question which would require legislation, and the discussion of matters requiring legislation is not in order.

*MR. REES said that on this subject he was following the example of other speakers, but he apologised for transgressing the rules of order as now laid down. All he wished to say on this point was that vast sums of money had been spent on the Uganda railway, and the Government might prevent such expenditure in future and conduce to the development of railways in British possessions by encouraging private enterprise instead of spending such a large amount per mile out of the public purse. The spirit displayed in the debate did not conspicuously encourage private enterprise. It had been stated by one hon. Member that the President of the United States in his message to Congress condemned great railway combinations. That was perfectly true, but he also equally condemned attacks upon property. That the law of the United States had proved to be amply sufficient to deal with the question of combinations was clear from the case of the Northern Securities. An hon. Member had complained that on the District Railway and upon the Tube Railways there were not enough trains and not sufficiently long trains running during certain hours of the day. It must be evident that it was impossible for railway companies to run trains during the day time of the same length and so frequently as they did in the early morning and in the evening. Such trains would be run at an enormous loss in London in the middle of the day. Unless those railway companies economised in the day time it would be impossible for them to pay any dividends at all. Many of the railway companies were actually carrying passengers at a loss at the present moment, and in sheer justice to their proprietors were bound to raise their rates. In conclusion, he would like the right hon. Gentleman to inform the Committee whether he had any autocratic power to compel any railway company to carry passengers or goods at a loss?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs) said that with regard to the grievance which had been alluded to by the hon. Member for Montgomery Boroughs he would undertake to have inquiries made into the matters referred to. He had received a letter from the hon. Member which presented the matter very clearly, and he would give it his attention. As the hon. Member was aware, his powers in these matters as President of the Board of Trade were not very great, but he would undertake to make representations to the railway companies concerned. But before he came to the general question of railways, he would like to reply on some matters of general interest which had been referred to by his hon. friend the Member for the Bosworth division of Leicestershire, who congratulated the country on the great boom in trade. The facts were very well known to the House, and he need not dwell upon them. There was no doubt that we in common with two or three other manufacturing countries had had a very considerable boom in trade, and the only observation he would make in regard to that was that, judging from the Returns given to the Board of Trade, this country, at any rate, had had a larger proportion of the international trade than almost any of our competitors in the market. In the Returns for the first five months of the present year it was matter for congratulation to find that, while the increase in import trade had been about a million, the export trade had increased by £20,000,000. Official reports indicated that the state of employment in the country was satisfactory, the building trade being the exception, as it often was, and several reasons could be assigned for it. Among other reasons was the fact that much building was carried on by speculative builders, who were dependent on the state of the money market. With a large demand for money for commercial development, the prices for materials went up, but eventually the building trade would share in the general prosperity. So far as could be judged, though it was almost as difficult to forecast trade as to forecast the weather, the prospects were good, and there was no probability of reaction. He agreed that we had reason to rejoice at the prosperity in German and American trade, for it meant, as the Returns showed, a substantial increase of our export trade to those countries. Trade was good, with every prospect of continuance for some time to come. The percentage of unemployed workmen had gone down very considerably, and there had been a considerable increase in wages. He was glad to think that this increase of something like £5,000,000 in the year was not the result of any great disputes, but the result of accommodation and arrangement between workmen and employers. He was glad to think that workmen were participating in the general trade boom.

SIR J. BRUNNER: And using their wages well.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Yes, the liquor bill was not going up as a few years ago used to be the case as trade improved. Some sound criticism had been directed to the form and manner of the Returns issued by the Board of Trade. There was much to be said in favour of issuing a further series of fiscal Blue-books, and he quite agreed that these publications should impartially put forward all available facts in relation to the fiscal controversy. In the monthly White-books on imports and exports it had been said much was lacking in regard to classification, and he had felt that himself. A Committee had been appointed under the Trade Census Act to consider this subject, and report to the larger Committee which would sit in the autumn. At the same time, it would be a mistake to be continually making changes in these White-books, because their value was for purposes of comparison, and if changes were made from month to month, or even from year to year, they would become so complicated and obscure as to become worthless to those who examined them, comparing year with year. The question of values of imports and exports was an important one. The export values were estimated on the goods put on board; but the value of the goods brought in was not the value as they left the country from which they were exported, but plus freight, insurance, and commission, so that the figures on the face of the return as payments to a foreign country often included payments made to people in this country. It was worth while considering whether some improvement could be made in the Returns in this connection. He wished to say another word in regard to trade. His hon. friend had suggested that, instead of consuls, we should have agents in foreign markets who would be practically our trade and commercial representatives. That was a very big question, and one with which the Board of Trade was not solely concerned. But the Board of Trade by arrangement and in conjunction with the Foreign Office had done a great deal to improve matters in this respect within the last few months, and he hoped that they would be able to continue to do so. They also, as a result of what passed at the Colonial Conference, where attention was called to the fact that every other country but our own had trade representatives in the Colonies, had decided, after consultation with the Intelligence Committee of the Board of Trade, to set up a system of commercial agents, who would correspond with the consuls in foreign countries, and attend to the interest of trade in the Colonies. The Board of Trade would thus have reported to them what was going on in the Colonies, which were such valuable markets to us, and the Colonies would be kept informed of markets to which they could send their goods in this country. He trusted that it would be to the mutual advantage of the Colonies and ourselves to have representatives of this character, who would be doing their best for the development of our trade with them and of their trade with us. In the course of the last twelve months commercial missions had been sent to Germany, France, and Belgium, to inquire into the industrial conditions of those countries and get at the facts in regard to the wages paid to the working classes, their hours of labour, their food and other commodities consumed by them, the rents of their houses, and generally to report on their industrial development. They also had made inquiry in regard to railways in those countries. He attached great importance to that, because the railways, in his opinion, had a great deal more to do with the development of countries than we were sometimes ready to admit. It would be of little use having these inquiries made abroad unless similar inquiries were made in this country, and the Board of Trade had taken steps to accumulate a great mass of facts bearing on social and industrial conditions at home. To the voluntary wages census the employers had responded liberally and well. The returns upon a similar census in 1886 only covered 1,500,000 workmen. The returns under the new census already received by the Board of Trade covered at least 3,000,000 of workmen. He attached very great importance to those returns, and considered that they would be of the utmost possible value when they came to consider many important questions relating to commerce and industry. Another step which the Board of Trade had taken was to institute investigations in great industrial centres throughout Great Britain and Ireland into the standard wages in the most important trades, the cost of living, the wages paid, the hours worked, rent of workmen's houses, and, indeed, all the facts that bore on the condition of the working people in those districts. The facts when published would contain more valuable and more reliable information on matters of the greatest moment to the industries of the country than, probably, any volume hitherto published in this country. The work had been done very carefully by the most skilled investigators, and he could assure the Committee that it had been done impartially, without any sort of view of proving this or that theory or idea. Once they started that principle, they vitiated the whole of the returns. Investigators simply inquired into the facts, and gathered them together in leaflets. Some newspapers wrote articles in regard to the state of the trade, commerce, industry, and labour here and there in the country, but those statements were believed everywhere except in the districts to which they were intended to apply. The Board of Trade had done their very best to get at the real condition of things, and their report might be accepted without suspicion as absolutely impartial. He could not help thinking that the statistical side of the Board of Trade was exceedingly important from every point of view. It ought to be regarded as the Intelligence Department of the commerce and industry of the country, and should be as efficient as the Intelligence Department in war. As to the census of production, he had promised in passing the Bill last year that it should be conducted in a way which would harass traders in a minimum degree. First of all, the Board of Trade had set up a general Committee which he thought was impartial and representative, but it was intended to appoint special Committees to deal with special trades, because he could quite understand that there might be trades which would not give information involving the divulging of trade secrets. These inquiries would really be conducted for the assistance of the different trades, and not to do them any harm. What was wanted was only to ascertain the actual facts. Now he came to the question of the railways. He agreed that no question could engage the attention of the House which was of more importance to the trade and industry of this country than that of railway transport. A question had been put to him in regard to owners' risks, which he could not answer without coming under the Chairman's condemnation. He only hoped that the Bill dealing with owners' risks, which had already gone through the Committee upstairs, would pass this session if the hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London did not show a too eager desire to improve all the Bills introduced by the Government. He was sorry that the hon. Baronet did not show the same industry in improving the Bills introduced by the late Government. As to railway rates and the rebate system on certain railways, his hon. friend knew his views on that subject. In so far as the arrangement was made for the purpose of destroying competition between the railway companies and of preventing rates being reduced to the trader, he thought it was a bad arrangement, because, after all, if the present system was maintained the public ought to get the benefit of it.

As his hon. friend the Member for Northants had said, there were two possible systems to be adopted. We might have a system of railways run by private enterprise, or we might have a system, such as that which prevailed in Germany, in India, and in some of our Colonies, of State-owned railways. The advantage of the first system was that they got the competition between the railway companies, and that seemed to him to be one of the greatest advantages which ought to be derived from the system. The public ought, he thought, to get the benefit of open competition, but if the public were to lose all the advantage of private ownership, without securing any of the advantage of the public ownership, then he thought the people would have to reconsider its whole action towards the railway and transport system of the country. That was all he could say without trenching upon the domain of legislation; but in regard to administration, so far as the Board of Trade's jurisdiction could be exercised it would be exercised, he trusted, in order to prevent the railway companies depriving the trader of any advantage he enjoyed under the present system and to which he was entitled.

SIR F. CHANNING inquired as to the subject of ensuring publicity for the agreements as to combination.

MR. LLOYD - GEORGE said he would take steps, so far as he could do so. He had addressed communications to the railway companies as to the arrangements they had entered into; they had replied, and these replies had been published and were in the possession of the House of Commons. Any other point which the hon. Gentleman wished to put to the railway companies he would be glad to put. They had never denied information, and when a request had been sent by the Board of Trade he could not recall an occasion on which they had not given an answer which was consistent with the facts of the case. Coming to the important question raised by the hon. Member for Stockport in regard to railway accidents, he was sorry to say this was the worst year for five or six years, largely owing to the great accidents of Grantham, Salisbury, and Arbroath. As far as accidents to railway servants were concerned, there had been a great improvement during the last few years. But still the number of accidents was deplorable, and he thought it was the business of the Board of Trade to do what they could to reduce the number. They had appointed a Committee to look into the question of either-side brakes and automatic couplings. He was sorry that the inspecting officer of the Board of Trade had come to the conclusion that the experiments in automatic couplings which had been made were not a success. Whether it was possible to find some other device which would protect the railway servants engaged in these dangerous coupling operations he did not know, but the Committee was still prosecuting its inquiries, which would take some time, because they involved practical experiments, not merely experiments with models.

*MR. WARDLE inquired whether he was to understand that anything had been done by the Committee with regard to automatic couplings.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said he had no right to express a conclusion on the matter, but the inspecting officer had gone into the question and come to the conclusion that they were not a success. He regretted this and he was sure the railway companies did. These casualties ran into hundreds and thousands, and must cost them a considerable sum in the way of compensation, much more than they would have to spend in any device for preventing them. But the pecuniary consideration, he was sure, was the last view they took of the matter, because, after all, these men were in their employment, and he was sure they would do all they could to prevent casualties. Two or three suggestions had been made during the debate that the number of inspectors should be increased. He did not want unnecessarily to increase the number of inspectors, but if it could really be proved that an increase in the number would materially reduce the loss of human life he would be quite willing to look into the matter. He must say he thought the Board of Trade inspectorate was understaffed. As to hours of labour, excessive hours had probably a good deal to do with some of the accidents which had occurred. They had a useful debate earlier in the session initiated by his hon. friend the Member for North East Derby, who brought forward a number of cases to prove that the hours of labour were excessive, and, he must say, oppressive on some of the railways of this country, especially on the Lancashire and Yorkshire, the Great Central, and the Midland Railway Companies. He had seen some of the managers of these railways, and they were quite candid about the matter. They did not deny the facts; they admitted the state of things, and undertook to do their best to reduce the hours of labour. However, that was not sufficient, and during that debate he promised that he would take further steps to bring pressure, within the powers that he possessed, to bear upon the railway companies substantially to reduce the excessive hours, and he said that if the powers he possessed were inadequate he would certainly come to Parliament to strengthen them. As a result he singled out some of the worst cases, and instead of demanding a return once every quarter, which came in very late, he asked for reports rather of special districts considered to be bad. In some of the worst cases three inspectors of the Board of Trade had been sent down to make inquiries. They did not go down merely on the complaint of railway servants. They went down to districts where they had good reason to believe that workmen were being worked excessive hours. They saw the men in the absence of their officials; and they saw the officials and obtained very full and frank statements. No names were taken down; and only a general note was taken of the result of the inquiries. The result in some cases was rather bad. On the Midland, the Lancashire and Yorkshire, and the Great Central Railways the result was very bad. There was some substance in the excuse which the railway companies put forward. It was the difficulty they had of coping with the enormous increase in the trade of their districts, and especially in the coal trade. There were train loads standing for hours because they could not get along, and they could not deal with the congestion. Sometimes they got stuck in places where the men could not get food. Major Pringle reported one case in which a man had been ten hours without food after he had been twelve hours on duty. Some of these cases were perfectly inhuman—men working for fifteen, sixteen, and, in some cases, seventeen hours. The railway companies pleaded that they had great difficulty in finding men. This year thirty-eight Army Reservists were recommended to the Midland Company, he thought it was, for employment. Of that number twenty-two did not reply to the communications sent to them, nine refused the situation because they were not satisfied with the wages, four were refused on account of eyesight, one could not be found, and only two were employed. That showed the difficulty of the railway companies. The real reason was that the men could get better wages in other employment. On the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway some of the cases were very bad. In Wigan during last winter 47 per cent. of the employment was in excess of twelve hours; in Accrington, 16 per cent.; in Goole, 23 per cent.; in Wakefield, 36 per cent.; and in Bury, 33 per cent. The Board of Trade had done their best in these cases, and they had received the utmost assistance from the Railway Company. In Wigan the 47 per cent. had been reduced to 3 per cent.; in Accrington the 16 per cent. had heen reduced to 1 per cent.; in Goole the 23 per cent. had been reduced to 4 per cent.; in Wakefield the 36 per cent. had been reduced to 8 per cent.; and in Bury the 33 per cent. had been reduced to 1·4 per cent. The Great Central Company had also met the Board of Trade, and in some of the worst cases, where there was a very high percentage before the inquiry, there was now hardly any excess at all. He wished he could say as much for the Midland Company. The reduction they had effected was not at all satisfactory. What the Lancashire and Yorkshire and the Great Central Companies had achieved ought also to have been accomplished by the Midland Company. He trusted they would not make it necessary for the Board of Trade to press them any further, or to take steps which they would be bound to take under the powers given them and under the obligations cast upon them by Act of Parliament. He thought a strong case had been made out in regard to superannuation funds, but it was a matter upon which he must consult the Treasury and the other Departments concerned, because he rather thought the Registrar of Friendly Societies came in here. The inquiry to which the hon. Baronet the Member for Northwich had referred was being pressed on. He had always been impressed with the importance of railway transport in the development of the trade and industry of the country. He was not sure that the railway companies would not welcome an inquiry into the subject. Pressure was being brought to bear upon them to curtail the hours of labour, to reduce railway rates, to reduce fares, and to provide workmen's trains. There must be a limit unless the country was prepared to take the risk which these demands involved. Owing to circumstances for which the companies were not altogether responsible, the railways in this country had cost an enormous sum of money. The shareholders put their money into these investments, and they had to consider the return on the whole of the investments in the railway companies; he did not think that it was unfair to do that. Some companies were doing well, some badly, but if they took the average return on the whole of the companies, in his judgment it was not an extravagant one. He did not mean to say that the country had not a right to say that it must have these full facilities. We must have railway rates reduced, we must have the hours of labour cut down to a certain point, we must achieve workmen's fares, we must put an end to the system which developed foreign countries at the expense of our own. He was certain that if all this was to be achieved for a great public purpose, it ought not to be achieved at the expense of the investor, because he was sure that it would not be in the interests of the country itself. Let them take the question of the shortening of the hours of labour. which was really, so far as he had been able to discover, not so much a question of the desire of the railway companies to get as much as they could out of the men, as it was a question of their being able to get them to work up to a point at which other workmen could be put on. That resolved itself into a question of an increased number of sidings, increased accommodation, doubling the number of rails, increasing the rolling stock, and the supply of other necessary facilities which constituted the real means by which to reduce the hours of labour. These were all questions which meant more capital. The London and North Western had most successfully coped with the question of railway hours, but that was a rich company, able to spend money which other railway companies could not possibly afford; they could provide facilities and they could meet these demands; but many other companies could not. And that was why he said that he was not loth that these matters should be pressed; for he thought it absolutely monstrous that a man should work seventeen, fourteen or thirteen, hours a day, and he had it officially that a man worked twelve hours, the whole day, without getting any food at all. Surely these things were a perfect disgrace to a great industrial country like ours, highly developed and highly organised. At the same time, if these things were to be remedied, and the country made up its mind that they were to be dealt with as a great question of public policy, then the people who benefited by it ought to bear the burden, and they ought to be prepared to face it. They faced it in other countries. They faced it in New Zealand, in Australia, in Germany to a very large extent, and in Belgium, and we had got to face it here if the question had to be dealt with effectively. At the same time, until that was done, he thought that they must proceed cautiously, otherwise they would be preventing the accomplishment of the objects which they all had in their minds. That was why he was prosecuting inquiries into how these things were worked abroad. He would appeal to both sides of the House to approach these questions purely from the point of view of what was best for the trade of the country. These were not controversial matters, at least they ought not to be, for the moment they became controversial he was sure that much harm would be done, and he would be very glad if they could be kept out of the region of controversy. Trade and commerce ought not to be a Party question; they ought to be able to approach these questions in a non-Party spirit, and he was perfectly sure that if that were done they would be able to accomplish what would be in the general interests of the country. Before he sat down he wished to reply to a question which had been asked in reference to the protection of the watch trade in this country. He had made inquiries with reference to the watch-making trade done in this country by persons abroad, and this was the kind of information which he got. We had in this country the provision that a gold watch made and sold by the British manufacturer was to be really gold, and not merely a thin layer of gold over base metal—not a covering of gold thinner than a wafer through which one could easily push the point of a pin. The British-made watch had to be of gold—the dome plates and all the essential parts of the watch had to be of gold; that was the law of the land. But a foreign watch, with this thin covering of gold over base metal in all the essential parts, could be sold in this country as gold. That was purely a fraud on the purchaser, and had nothing to do with the fiscal question; it was simply a protection of the consumer here against fraud, and all they had to do in that case was to see that the same measure of justice was applied to the foreign trader who came to this country as we applied to our own trader. That had been done since 1st June, and it had been left to this Government to do. They had not discriminated against the foreigner, but in future the same measure would be applied to the foreigner as to the British trader. The foreign trader who came here had to subject his watch to the same tests as were imposed upon the British-made article. Another question was with regard to inspectors. It was suggested that inspectors should be sent prowling around to detect these frauds.

An HON. MEMBER: That is what you do in regard to the adulteration of food.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE said that that was a different thing; the adulteration of food affected the health and life of the people, who must be protected. The Chamber of Commerce had made the same suggestion in regard to inspection as his hon. friend, but when they had come to consider it they saw that it was really impracticable. ["They changed their minds?"] They changed their minds. ["Again?"] He did not think again. They were dropping inspection, and the first thing they had to do was to prosecute in cases of fraud. He thought he had satisfied the deputation which he had received that all that could be done was to prosecute wherever there was a fraud of this kind. It was the duty of the Board of Trade to prosecute whenever a case was reported not merely in this country but abroad. In regard to articles of this character sold abroad as British goods he thought it was the duty of the Board of Trade to protect the British trader in those circumstances also. He was much obliged to his hon. friend for the very kind things he said about the administration of the Board of Trade. He had done the very best he could in the short time he had been at the Board of Trade for the trade and industries of the country. He thought that there was a great deal which could be done by administration to assist the commerce of the country, and that by means of obtaining information which would be of use to our traders with regard to what was going on abroad among our foreign competitors, with regard to possible fields of operation, and in regard to the protection of our trade and commerce, much could be usefully done in the promotion of our interests, and he would be very glad to do that work to the very utmost of his power.

Mr. BONAR LAW (Camberwell, Dulwich) said he was sure that he was only expressing the feeling of the House when he said that the right hon. Gentleman had no reason to apologise for the length of his speech, which was interesting throughout to all who heard it. It was quite true that the right hon. Gentleman had thrown out a challenge which in other circumstances he would have been bound to accept. In dealing with trade the right hon. Gentleman had made remarks which were undoubtedly intended to show that our system was better than others as borne out by the statistics which he had obtained. The Committee would give him credit for saying that he did not wish to raise that issue at the present moment, because he thought that it could not be usefully pressed now.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said he had not raised the fiscal question in what he had said.

MR. BONAR LAW said the right hon. Gentleman had stated that the export of manufactured goods from this country was greater than that of any other country.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: No; I did not say that.

MR. BONAR LAW said he had certainly thought the right hon. Gentleman did not mean to raise the question; he was willing to let it drop so far as the present discussion was concerned. There were other aspects of the subject which, from his own experience at the Board of Trade, he would rather speak about. The right hon. Gentleman had spoken at some length and with some interest about the efforts which he had made and was making that the Board of Trade should become the intelligence department of trade and commerce in this country. The right hon. Gentleman had said a great deal about the statistics of that department, and with every word that he had said in regard to these matters he thoroughly agreed. Indeed, he would far rather have at the head of this particular department a right hon. Gentleman who was constantly making demands for something to be done than one who did nothing and simply allowed things to drift. He was not going to pay compliments to the right hon. Gentleman, but, whatever else might be said about him, at any rate it could not be said that he had been doing nothing; for he had been doing a good deal in spite of the discouragements which had been placed in his way. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would continue to realise that when every other country was organising its trade on the same principle as its Army, it was our business also to do exactly the same, and to see that we did not suffer in the competition. That brought him to what used to be considered a hardy annual when he was at the Board of Trade, for there never was a discussion on the Board of Trade Vote in which the question of appointing a Minister of Commerce was not raised. A great deal had been heard in the debates and otherwise about the appointment of a Minister of Commerce; but he thought that President of the Board of Trade was as good a title as that of Minister of Commerce. On the other hand, he was of opinion that for a country like ours, which depended more than any other country upon its trade, to have the department responsible for trade and commerce as a second-rate office was a disgrace to the country and not to be tolerated. It was no use talking to the right hon. Gentleman about that, because if he took any action in the matter it would look like asking for an increase in his own salary. It was, however, the duty of hon. Members to press the importance of the right hon. Gentleman's position on the Prime Minister and on the members of the Government. The Board of Trade stood constantly between capital and labour, but it stood in many instances where it had no power. From that point of view it was extremely important that the man who filled the office should have weight on his own account as well as weight in connection with the office he filled. It might be said that the department had been provided with good men in the past at a salary of £2,000 as compared with £5,000. He had not found that to be so in any other phase of human activity with which he was acquainted. For a second-rate office they might get a good statesman, but they only got his services while on the road to promotion, and such a man never came back to the office. This, then, was a question which the whole House might usefully press on the Government. In regard to the railways, when he represented the Board of Trade he found that everyone was ready to attack them and no one, except the directors, was inclined to defend them. He had come early to the conclusion, and he believed that the right hon. Gentleman would be driven to the same conclusion, that it was his business in the public interest to protect the railways in the House rather than to stimulate the hostility which was so often directed against them. The right hon. Gentleman was right when he said at the opening of a tube railway the other day that railway companies could not be carried on to the best advantage of the public if they were carried on at a loss. Unless they caused the public to look upon the railways as a fair investment, they would not be able to get new capital, and, instead of improving, the railways would get worse, while the service would be seriously injured by the constant habit of nagging at them. The speech of the hon. Baronet the Member for East Northamptonshire was an attack upon the railway companies because they had tried to make arrangements to save expense and remove unnecessary competition. The argument of all those who attacked the companies was that they were doing away with all forms of competition and injuring trade by taking away rebates. He could quite understand why the hon. Member for Leicester felt strongly upon that matter, because a system of rebates was not in the interests of the general trader. In respect of rebates, the big trader could put pressure on the railway company, and he received special advantages which gave him a pull over the smaller competitor; he used all his influence to prevent the company from making arrangements to reduce expenditure and thus to benefit everyone connected with the service. Where he lived in Scotland there were two railways, the Caledonian and the North British, and they both ran a service of trains between Edinburgh and Glasgow. He found that the trains went from both stations generally about the same hour, and they competed with each other in a way which was to their own disadvantage as well as to the disadvantage of the public. If the companies were encouraged to do what they could to reduce expense by saving unnecessary competition, more money would be available to spend on the general improvement of the system. It ought, therefore, to be the duty of the representatives of the railwaymen, and he had pointed this out to the hon. Member for Derby, to prevent the companies from being attacked when no good service was to be derived to the public from the attack. The right hon. Gentleman would find that in some system of saving unnecessary competition lay the best future for the railway companies. The companies' rates were fixed by Act of Parliament, and, if they could save expense in competition, they would be enabled to give better terms to traders all round, as well as to the travelling public, and have something to give their shareholders in the way of dividends to encourage fresh capital being put into the undertakings. Lately the right hon. Gentleman had been speaking about tube railways. These tube railways were a lesson to the House. When the measures establishing these railways were being carried through the House the President of the Local Government Board over and over again denounced the syndicates as monopolies that were being formed to take money out of the hands of the citizens of London, who ought, he said, to run these railways for themselves. But what did they find now? The tube railways were financially a complete failure. Did the right hon. Gentleman think that the London County Council would have managed them better?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea) said the right hon. Gentleman, he was sure unintentionally, had entirely misrepresented his views with regard to tube railways. He had always held the view that they would never be successful because they were not adapted to the peculiar form of traffic and to the habits of London people. He knew that on one occasion he suggested that intending investors had better be careful before embarking their money upon tube railways. No doubt the hon. Member would recollect that he stated that ten or fifteen years hence it would be found necessary on the part of the owners of the tube railways to sell them to the London County Council, or at least to sell some of them, for storm sewers.

Mr. BONAR LAW: That is not my recollection of the right hon. Gentleman's attitude.

*Mr. JOHN BURNS: But it is a fact.

Mr. BONAR LAW said they were attacked, he knew, by many hon. Members of the House on the ground that they could be more successfully carried on by local bodies, but the result showed that the reverse was the case. What the House, in the general interest, had to consider was that speculation was not the business either of the State or of the municipality. If they gave private enterprise a fair run for its money, if they had a failure here and a success there, then private enterprise would be encouraged to undertake enterprises which were to the advantage of the public and run the risks. He thought that that in the end would be to the general advantage of the community.

*Mr. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.) asked whether the President of the Board of Trade had made similar inquiries in Scotland into the hours which were being worked by railway servants on the Scottish railways. He knew that the right hon. Gentleman had had placed before him some flagrant instances of overtime worked in Scotland.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE said that there had been only one case in regard to the railways in Scotland where the hours of work were long. They had looked into the subject, and, if the answers to their representations were not satisfactory, the Department would certainly institute an inquiry on the spot.

Mr. WARD (Stoke-on-Trent) thought the speech of the hon. Member for Dulwich furnished the most cogent argument in favour of the nationalisation of railways. The hon. Member had said that the reason why there could not be any reduction in railway rates and fares was because there were often two railways running into one locality, with the result that they had two trains going to the same place at the same time.

And, it being a quarter-past Eight of the clock, and there being Private Business set down by direction of the Chairman of Ways and Means under Standing Order No. 8, further Proceeding was postponed without Question put.

KING EDWARD'S HOSPITAL FUND FOR LONDON BILL [Lords] (BY ORDER).

Consideration, as amended, deferred till Monday next, at a quarter-past Eight of the clock.

SUPPLY (CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES.)

Postponed Proceeding on Question, "That a sum, not exceeding £184,484, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1908, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of the Committee of the Privy Council for Trade and Subordinate Departments," resumed.

Mr. WARD, continuing his speech, said the illustration which had been given only amounted to this, that we had the most antiquated methods of conducting our railways. Probably the system was satisfactory enough in the forties and fifties, when railways were a novelty and did not enter so much into the life of the nation as they did at the present time, but it was totally unsuited to modern requirements. He held that these institutions should be under the control of one authority, in order that the present useless expense incurred by the companies might be obviated and the benefit given to those who wanted their merchandise conveyed from place to place. He wished to call the attention of the President of the Board of Trade to the position of a very great and important section of the industrial community. While some of the public works of the country so far as inspection, etc. was concerned were under the control of the Home Office, fortunately or unfortunately railways, docks and canals, etc., when in course of construction came within the jurisdiction of the Board of Trade. When in actual use docks were properly inspected by the Home Office, these structures on completion being regarded under the Factories Acts as factories, and the admission had been made that it was peculiar that they should not come under that Department when in course of construction. In spite of the fact that there might be a thousand or two thousand, or even—as in the case of Barry—three thousand men working in a limited space, constructing a dock and manipulating very complicated and dangerous machinery, no one seemed to have the power of inspection. The Home Office asserted that the Notice of Accidents Act, 1894, placed inspection and regulation, especially in regard to inquiry into accidents, in the hands of the Board of Trade, and that Department seemed absolutely to have forgotten that fact. They had never had an inspection, although great railways in course of construction should have been under their control for fourteen or fifteen years, and they had never appointed an inspector. There were some 300,000 men permanently employed on these works, and not the slightest attention was paid to their welfare so long as periodical inspection of the works they were engaged upon was concerned. Could he not persuade the President of the Board of Trade that it was nearly time some inspectors were appointed by his Department, so that these men might have the common protection given by factory and other legislation to the workmen employed in other industries ? Sir John Jackson, in opening the great docks at Devonport, which cost nearly four millions of money, stated that although every precaution had been taken by his firm to avoid serious accidents, he was sorry to say the fatalities amounted to something between thirty and forty per million of money spent, and that the men who had been so seriously injured as to be incapacitated from future employment were so numerous that the firm had not even kept a record of them. That was a very serious position of affiars. These men were neither one thing nor the other. They did not come under the Factory Acts, the Home Office had nothing to do with them, and the Board of Trade would only consider them when absolutely compelled to do so by reason of a serious accident. He thought they should try to do something to avoid accidents rather than merely investigate them after they had occurred. Whenever important works were begun the contractors had to erect a whole system of hospitals, knowing perfectly well that the work could not be carried out without enormous mortality to the men engaged on them. He thought the matter was one that should be dealt with by the State without delay.

Mr. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough) said the hon. Member for the St. Patrick's division of Dublin had suggested that the time had arrived when a Shipping Department should be established entirely separate from railways and other matters. They had been told by the right hon. Gentleman that the shipping industry was the greatest industry in the country ; but last year they had no opportunity of discussing it, and this year they were only to have an hour and a half that evening. That was not a satisfactory state of things ; they ought to have more time for the discussion of everything connected with the mercantile marine. In regard to the salary of the President of the Board of Trade he thought it was not sufficient for the office which the right hon. Gentleman filled. He did not see why the right hon. Gentleman should receive a salary of only £2,000, while other Cabinet Ministers got £4,000 or £5,000. He wished to urge the Government to establish in connection with the Board of Trade a separate Department for the mercantile amrine. The Department should have the chief control of all the documents relating to the mercantile marine and be able to search carefully through the log books of every ship at the end of each voyage. He found that the Department was worked at a less cost by £6,000 than it was ten years ago, while the amount of work to be done by it had been increasing. Men who were getting £150 to £170 used to get from £400 to £500 for doing exactly the sâme work. He understood that the Treasury was at the root of this economy, and the grievances of the men ought to be carefully inquired into and put right. He knew of one man who had been thirty-five years in the Department, who had only between 35s. and 40s. a week, which was not sufficient for the very important work he had to perform. He had urged the establishment of a central register for keeping a record of the engagements of every seaman in the mercantile marine. The Government spent as much money on registers at various ports at present as would be sufficient for the maintenance of a central register. At the present time, if the parents, wife, or friends of a seaman wanted to ascertain his whereabouts they had to communicate with every port in the United Kingdom, and the superintendent in each port had to reply to the Registrar-General; whereas, if there were a central register, as provided for by the Merchant Shipping Act of 1852, it would be much easier to obtain all the information required. He believed that at one time a central register was kept, and he could not understand why it was not still kept as provided for by law. Supposing a shipowner in the case of a collision wanted to find the whereabouts of a particular man who had been on board one of the ships in collision, he had no remedy but to write to every port in the United Kingdom. That was a source of trouble and expense. Last year the Board of Trade took part in passing a law which provided that every seaman before he was entitled to the rating of A.B. must prove three years' sea service. That section of the Act came into force on the 1st June this year. It was naturally expected that the Board of Trade would make some effort to see that that law was enforced. He could not understand why a master, owner, or an agent of the owner should be allowed to take on as ordinary seamen or as deck men—he really did not know what deck men were—men who were not qualified. He remembered that at the Shipping Conference the Colonial delegates passed a resolution that the British Government should make a uniform rule as to the engagement of competent able seamen. They had been told that the Board of Trade had power to detain ships which were not properly manned. He remembered that in 1893, after a disastrous wreck and loss of life at Brandon, the Government appointed a Committee to investigate the question of undermanning. The Committee was, it was said, a representative one; but, like all Committees appointed by the Board of Trade, good care was taken to give the majority of votes to the shipowners, and he was the only representative of the seamen. That Committee sat for over two years, and as a result of their Report a Bill was passed in 1897 providing that a vessel leaving the United Kingdom undermanned should be considered unseaworthy, and that any person who sent an undermanned ship to sea should be deemed guilty of an offence. The Committee further recommended that a manning scale should be adopted and passed into law. The Committee reported in 1896; in 1897 the Conservative Government approached the subject in a half-hearted way and said that if a vessel was leaving in an unseaworthy state because of undermanning it could be detained. Why had the Board of Trade not acted on the recommendation of the Manning Committee that no ship over 700 tons gross tonnage should be allowed to leave a port in the United Kingdom on a foreign voyage with less than six deck hands, four of the six to be recognised able seamen? That was the recommendation of the Manning Committee, and the Board of Trade had power to detain a ship on the ground of unseaworthiness because she was undermanned. What did the Board of Trade do? They sent out instructions to their superintendents that no ship over 700 tons should be allowed to proceed to sea with less than six deck hands. What did they mean by deck hands? The Manning Committee said that of these six deck hands four were to be able-bodied seamen, and why did not the Board of Trade insert that provision in their regulations? They had power to do so, and they ought to have seen that there were these qualified able seamen on the deck. He put a Question in the course of the week about a steamer which put to sea with six European sailors on board whose wages were £4 a month. After the first six months, however, a crew of Chinamen were engaged at the cheaper rate of £3 10s. When the Chinamen came to sign on under the new Act they could not prove three years sea service, and the Board of Trade obliged the owners by allowing them to sign on as ordinary seamen at the £3 10s. a month. In his reply to a Question the right hon. Gentleman said that the matter had been referred to the surveyor, who reported that the men had been seen by him, and he was satisfied that they would be found capable of performing the usual duties of seamen. He (the surveyor) had tested them in moving the steamer in dock and found that they were capable of performing the ordinary duties of seamen. The task of moving a steamer in dock was one which boys could be entrusted with, but because they could do that it did not say that the Chinamen were efficient seamen. The surveyor added that according to the master's statement he had selected four of these men to act as helmsmen. There was a ship of 700 tons which was allowed to proceed to sea from a port in the United Kingdom with these incompetent Chinese seamen on board. In another case a steamer of 2,800 tons was allowed to proceed to sea from a port in the United Kingdom with six incompetent Chinese seamen who could not speak English on board as ordinary seamen. The inspecting officer said he was informed that the men had three years sea service, but who informed him or how did he ascertain that fact if he was not a linguist and did not speak the Chinese language? Most captains who had their certificates suspended got into that position by failing to use the lead, but how was an officer of a vessel to use the lead in dark and foggy weather when he had to deal with Chinamen who did not understand English? There was no excuse for the Board of Trade in this matter, because they had power to detain these ships but did not do so. He had also put another Question with regard to a ship called the "Siberian," one of the Allan Line, which had on board some 700 or 800 passengers. Under the Board of Trade manning regulations she should have had twenty-eight deck hands, including the officers, but she had only twenty-two, including eight qualified able seamen and twelve unqualified men. Why was this ship allowed to go to sea shorthanded? Was it safe to allow her to go to sea with twelve unqualified seamen, on whom the passengers would have to depend to take charge of the boats in case of emergency, instead of able-bodied seamen? It was all very well for people to say that we did not want sailors nowadays because the men had only to wash decks and polish brass work, but when it came to an emergency they must have competent men who would calm the fears of the passengers and get the boats out and handle them in a seamanlike manner. He had not exaggerated his case in saying that the responsibility for that rested on the right hon. Gentleman because of his surveyor having passed these unqualified persons. Then there was the case of the "Astoria," also from Glasgow. She had a small number of qualified, and a large number of unqualified, sailors. She was supposed to carry thirty-five officers and men. She had twenty-eight, and out of those twelve or more were unqualified men. The surveyor in that case said he knew some of the men were seamen, and had been on the ship in her previous voyage. But why did not the surveyor satisfy himself that they were qualified, as it was his duty to do? He hoped now that attention had been called to these two ships a sharper look-out would be kept by the Board of Trade, and that the right hon. Gentleman would send out a notice that the law must be obeyed. What was the use of a law being made that a man should serve three years on board ship before he became an able seaman if the owners are allowed to sign men on as deck hands or seamen, or anything but able seamen? The right hon. Gentleman knew perfectly well that under the Act undermanning was unseaworthiness. If this matter could not be dealt with by regulation he (Mr. Wilson) would not rest until it was settled by legislation. With regard to the load-line, he was sorry to say that by the seamen, who believed he was responsible, the right hon. Gentleman had been cursed more than any man he ever knew. As a matter of fact the right hon. Gentleman was not responsible, but the seamen believed he was. The late Government in 1905 appointed a secret Committee composed of underwriters, and that Committee set to work to undo all the work of Samuel Plimsoll. They secured an alteration in the scale of the freeboard, and the alterations came into force just as the right hon. Gentleman came into office, and therefore the right hon. Gentleman could not be held to blame. He thought that ought to be generally known throughout the country. He was not satisfied with these alterations, and told the right hon. Gentleman in March last that he would wait with patience to see what effect they had on loss of life at sea. His right hon. friend had made one mistake. The right hon. Gentleman said in answer to a question put last year that these alterations would not affect the old type of ships. Shortly after that the "Lebanon," an old vessel, on which the load-line had been altered by 2½ inches, foundered. He believed had there been no alteration in the load-line she would have been afloat to-day. The "Dulverton" had recently disappeared with all hands. She had not been heard of for two months and he feared would never be heard of again. The "Dulverton" shipped under the old load-line 6,500 tons and under the new load-line 7,884, and now she had disappeared. He could not say whether that was in consequence of the alteration of the load-line, but he had as much right to say it might be as anyone else to say that it was not. Had there been any advantage to the shipowners in the alteration of the load-line? It was true that ships carried 1,000,000 tons more in the course of the year, but freights had fallen. Therefore it had been of no advantage to the shipowners. But if the loss of life at sea was shewn to have increased, and he would be glad to have the figures for the two years from the right hon. Gentleman——

*MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I might be permitted to give them now. So far from there having been an increase in the loss of life after the alteration of the load-line there has been a decrease of something like 400. They were 1,466 under the old regulations and 1,079 under the new.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON said he was glad to hear that loss of life had not increased. At the same time he would remind his right hon. friend that the alteration of the load-line entailed hardships and suffering in many cases. It very often made all the difference in the seaworthiness of the ship. Reference had been made to the loss of life on railways, and it was stated that there were 40,000 men employed on railways. But on the sea there were 250,000. Even now, though there was a decrease in the loss of life, there was still room for improvement. He remembered the time when certain shipowners, at the period when there were 3,400 lives lost a year, said that it could not be avoided, that it was the act of God.

MR. CHARLES WILSON (Hull, W.) asked the hon. Member if he would give a single instance of a man having lost his life through overloading. These accidents were largely attributable to the negligence of the officers navigating the ships.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON said his hon. friend should read the Report of the Royal Commission. He was speaking from his own knowledge of the facts, and he did not need to read the Blue-books, but he could refer the hon. Gentleman to the book which would afford him the necessary information. In regard to the loss of life, he was proud to say that they had reduced it from 3,400 to 1,000 a year, and there was still room for improvement. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would give attention to the case of vessels which carried Chinamen on board. That was a very strong case indeed. Vessels carried about two Asiatics to one European. In the case of the vessel he had referred to it was not so. But he could of course give the names of many ships which had gone to sea during the past three weeks with unqualified men signed on. There was one other point. It was just about time that the Board of Trade were considering the insanitary condition of the forecastles of vessels. The Committee would be surprised to know that more men died from consumption or diseases of the chest on board ship than on land. To his mind it was due to the insanitary condition of the forecastles. The ventilation was not proper. As a matter of fact, according to the Board of Trade regulations a seaman ought to be able to read in any part of the forecastle by the natural light. He had visited a great many ships, hundreds, perhaps thousands, and he had not found one ship out of ten where a man could read a paper in any part of the forecastle by the natural light. He hoped that the Board of Trade would not pass such ships in future, and that they would give definite instructions in reference to the subject. If the Board of Trade challenged him upon the point he was prepared to show them the ships which were not provided with this natural light. With reference to ventilation, somehow or other it was thought that any kind of ventilation would do for the forecastle of a ship. If they put down a ventilator from the deck above it blew a gale of wind in the forecastle, and if it was near a poor fellow's bunk it blew on his head so terribly that he had to stuff up the ventilator with a pillow or some other material, with the result that there was no ventilation at all. He hoped that the Board of Trade would give greater consideration to this subject, because they could get perfect ventilation of a ship's forecastle at very little expense; it would cost the owners very little more in the construction of the ships and they would get better results. It was a very serious matter when they considered that these men were dying on board ship from consumption in greater numbers than were recorded on shore. He hoped that the President of the Board of Trade would cause inquiries to be made at the different ports where ships were being built, with a view to ensuring that some attention was given to these matters.

*THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. KEARLEY, Devonport) said he would endeavour to answer the various points which had been raised. With reference to the ventilation of forecastles, the hon. Member seemed to suggest that the Board of Trade inspectors were not so diligently looking after the requirements of light and air as they should be, and was prepared to point out ships which were deficient in this particular. This matter had been sprung upon him as it were, but if the hon. Gentleman could give a case where he thought that the requirements were not as they should be, he would be very happy to be informed about it. He hoped the hon. Gentleman would take that as a satisfactory answer for the time being. He was not going to refer to the kindly observations of the hon. Member in regard to the services of his right hon. friend, nor to the increase of his salary which was suggested, because that would involve an increase of his own salary, and being an interested person, unfortunately he might come under the censure of some hon. Member if he were to say "Hear, hear," to the suggestion. His hon. friend had pointed out that the mercantile marine had become so important, and was so increasing in importance, that the time had come when the Government should carefully consider the constitution of a separate Department for it, under a Minister of responsibility. The mercantile marine at the present time had a separate Department of the Board of Trade, under capable officials, with one or two responsible Parliamentary chiefs for the time being. But he was not at all inclined to disagree with the idea of his hon. friend of the growing importance of the mercantile marine of this country. Statistical information showed that as compared with the rest of the world we had nearly half the shipping tonnage, and therefore it was of supreme importance that matters relating to the mercantile marine shall be dealt with by an adequate Department. But the British Government, like most governments, were always loth to increase the number of Ministers who had to be paid. Still, there was something in the suggestion—not that he was, in saying that, in any responsible way committing himself to the suggestion which had been made on this difficult and very important point, though he was glad that his hon. friend had drawn attention to it. He could only suppose that the hon. Member in making the proposal was in a liberal vein, and that he really wanted to make another situation for a Minister with a good salary attached. The hon. Member had also referred to the salaries of the office of the Registrar-General, and had said that he was aware that the Department had made representations to the Treasury on the matter. A careful investigation had been made of all the branches of the Registrar's Department, and he thought from what had been learned that there was ground for consideration on the part of the Treasury as to the slowness of promotion from the lower to the higher grades. An inquiry was held in 1888 when it was found that the Department was overmanned. Drastic action was taken and the staff above the grade of the second (then lower) Division was reduced from thirty-five to twenty-two to be followed by further retirements. The numbers now stood at eleven, but the result of the action then taken had not yet been finally reached, and would not be reached until 1910. This blocked promotion from the lower to the more advanced grades, and, in the meantime, the work had enormously increased, and those who had survived the cutting down were not able to cope with the superior work, and consequently the lower division staff were doing higher division work, with very much lower pay, which, of course, gave rise to a grievance. His hon. friend had put forward other details, and he would inquire into them. But it was far more a matter for the Treasury, and he hoped that his hon. friend would be satisfied with the representations which had been made, and as soon as they got a reply one way or the other, he would make it known. His hon. friend had brought forward this matter with great consistency, and he knew the opinion which the hon. Gentleman held that it would be of benefit to the State to have a central place in which to keep the records of seamen, and that in the long run it would be a saving of expense. The Committee appointed in 1899 to inquire into the question of continuous discharge certificates for seamen came to the conclusion that the cost would certainly not be less than £5,000 to start a central register, and it would also involve an annual expenditure of £2,000 a year. He did not see what success they would meet with even if this expenditure was incurred. The Board of Trade were not desperately hostile to the idea, and they did not close the door upon that proposition. The Board of Trade were not unsympathetic, and the hon. Member might keep on bringing it before the House. The new Act of Parliament with reference to A.B. rating naturally took time to get into working order. The hon. Member had been early in his complaint. Under the new Act an A.B.'s qualification was deemed to be three years sea service, and he had to prove that service. That differed from the Act of 1894 under which no seaman was entitled to the rating of A.B. without he could prove four years service. While the hon. Member complained that the new regulations with regard to manning were not yet strictly enough carried out, the shipowners complained that they were being enforced with undue severity. When they found two opposite interests holding opposite views he did not think they could be far wrong in effecting an adjustment by taking a middle course. His hon. friend the Member for Middlesbrough complained that when vessels were going out to sea a number of men whom he described as the off-scourings of the ports and who were not efficient men were entered as deck hands and seamen. That accusation carried with it an imputation against the officers of the Board of Trade at the ports where those men signed on. Under the Act of 1897 undermanning was deemed to constitute unseaworthiness, and consequently the officers of the Board of Trade had the power to detain ships on the ground of unseaworthiness. If the hon. Member imputed that the superintendents were allowing men to be engaged who were not competent that meant that the ships were not being properly manned.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON said that that he did not make any charge against the superintendents. His point was that the Board of Trade, by their regulations, were placing their officers in such a position that they must allow unqualified men to sign on. He was not making any charge against the officers.

*MR. KEARLEY said that simply meant that the Board of Trade were putting their officers in such a position that they were bound to allow unqualified men to be engaged. Did he think it was at all likely that his right hon. friend and himself would deliberately issue instructions of that character?

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON said that was not what he meant. What he did say was that in 1896 the Board of Trade issued regulations which permitted a ship to sign on men as deck hands who were not qualified. Those regulations were in force now, and if the present officials of the Board of Trade allowed those regulations to continue in force the responsibility for ships being allowed to go to sea manned with incompetent men must rest with the right hon. Gentleman and the hon. Member.

*MR. KEARLEY asked his hon. friend to accept his assurance that they were watching this matter most carefully. A change had been made, and it might be that the very thing they had done with the intention of strengthening the mercantile marine would prove illusory, and they might find a worse state of things after the passing of the Act than existed before. The Board of Trade would not be satisfied with that state of things. They meant to have the ships properly manned. He believed the shipowners were most anxious to man the ships properly, but, if the Government found that the only way in which they could secure that object was by the introduction of a manning scale, they would not hesitate to introduce it. With regard to the load-line, they had the satisfaction of knowing that the new regulations had led to a great diminution in the loss of life at sea. He hoped his hon. friend would be satisfied with the reply he had given. He could assure him that they were watching the matter very carefully, and they would do all they could to see that the mercantile marine was properly manned.

Mr. WILKIE (Dundee) said that last year when a change of Government took place some of them thought that they had got in the right hon. Gentleman an ideal President of the Board of Trade and an ideal Parliamentary Secretary, but he feared the influence of the permanent officials had been too strong even for the present President of the Board of Trade, from whom so much had been expected. While in the past they had been delighted with the right hon. Gentleman's speeches throughout the country, judging from some of the speeches he had made from the Government Benches, one would imagine that he was a railway director, or a shipowner, instead of the energetic Member for Carnarvon. They expected when they elected such an advanced Government that they would have these matters set right. He had upstairs last session advocated some improvements which were necessary in the manning of vessels with the view to the safety of life and property at sea. The last Liberal Government considered the question of manning, and he found that recommendations of which they approved went beyond what the present Government were apparently prepared to accept. He would suggest that those who wished to inform themselves as to the necessity for the better manning of ships should read the evidence which was given before the Committee that inquired into the subject. For instance, the captain of the "Marlborough" writing in reference to the vessels being over-loaded and undermanned said—

> "I am not very soon frightened, but I do not see why my wife should be made a widow in order that another man should handle a little coin, I know he needs."

He had been some time without a ship, and his father persuaded him to give her another trial. The father never saw his son again, for the ship disappeared. The cases were innumerable which proved the necessity for a proper scale of manning. In the interest of sea-going labour the Government ought to deal with this grievous question. In shipping legislation which had already been passed, provisions were included requiring that captains, mates, engineers, and cooks, should be properly certificated; but the ship constructor, who knew the construction of his ship, and was the most required of all, especially in cases of stress and storm, was not even required to be carried, or to be certificated. On this matter evidence was given before the Committee, who made certain recommendations. [The hon. Member read the recommendations of the Committee.] Notwithstanding those recommendations, they were still where they were in regard to this very important matter. Another complaint which he wished to bring before the President of the Board of Trade was that the ship surveyors who could be appointed under the new Act had not the training necessary properly to qualify them for the important duties they had to perform. He was informed that they had little experience in ship construction, and, if that was so, he could not understand why the Board of Trade should run counter to the practice of Lloyds or of the Admiralty in the matter. He earnestly hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would seriously consider the subject. He understood that engineers were being appointed, and, while he had nothing to say against them in so far as their knowledge of the engines or the driving power was concerned, he did not think their knowledge of ship construction was such as to fit them for the position of ship surveyors so well as men who had been trained as shipbuilders. It was said that they must proceed cautiously in these matters, but he would remind hon. Members that two or three Royal Commissions had recommended what he was now urging, and he thought the time had arrived when Parliament should no longer allow the lives of men to be endangered on account of the action of some shipowners. He hoped that a proper understanding would be come to on the subject of the sufficient and efficient manning of vessels.

Mr. JOYCE (Limerick) called attention to the delays which occurred in the conveyance of Irish products to this country, and asked whether the President of the Board of Trade could do anything to remove the causes of complaint by making representations to the railway companies. In a letter which he had just received, Mr. Robert Gibson, butter merchant, Limerick, stated that four boxes, containing altogether two cwts. of butter, sent by Holyhead on Saturday to Harrow-on-the-Hill, had not been delivered by Tuesday night. The consignee at Harrow-on-the-Hill, in a letter to Mr. Gibson, said that his stock of butter was sold out, that orders were waiting execution, and that he had to telephone to London for Danish and Normandy butter. The English merchant complained of the inattention of railway companies in this matter, and said it was no wonder that there was so much foreign competition. This state of affairs had been going on for many years, and, now that he had called attention to it, he hoped that something would be done to effect a remedy.

MR. R. DUNCAN (Lanarkshire, Govan) said the present position of the mercantile marine, and the prospects which the future had in store for it, required that proper arrangements should be made by the Government Department for the development of the industry.

MR. C. E. PRICE (Edinburgh, Central) said that he quite agreed with what had been said in regard to improving the *status* of the office of the President of the Board of Trade. He remembered the time when the President of the Board of Trade was not in the Cabinet, but now his position was more important than that of the Secretary of State for War. He congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on the improvements which he had made in the *Board of Trade Journal*, but further improvements were desirable. He suggested that the right hon. Gentleman should copy in the *Journal* extracts from the Consular Reports, which contained a great deal of information. He also suggested that the Consular Reports themselves were capable of improvement, because many of the Consuls had had no business or any other training. When the Consular Reports spoke of the increase of trade in foreign countries it was important to know what was the effect of that trade on the condition of the people. From Washington, for example, it was reported that, although wages had generally advanced, they had not done so to the extent of the increased cost of living. Now, what was the value of that trade to America? The same thing applied to Germany. A short time ago a report was issued by the inspectors of factories in Leipzig as to the condition of workers in that city. That report ought to have been embodied in the Consul's Report. Unless they had this information they could never have an appreciation of the fair balance as to the effect of trade between two countries. There was nothing more misleading than to say that we had increased our business with a particular country by 30 per cent. if there was a decrease of 25 per cent. on profits. We must know what was the real benefit to us or to, say, the United States or Germany, as to the volume or value of the trade between these countries.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said he had no reason to complain of the discussion, but he appealed to the Committee to allow the Vote to be taken in order to give time for important matters connected with the Home Office Vote to come on, as arranged.

*MR. MORTON (Sutherland) said that he was not prepared to give way unless he was assured that they would have another evening on which they could discuss Board of Trade matters which he and his friends wished to bring forward.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said he could assure the hon. Gentleman and his friends that if they were anxious to raise matters of principle there would be another opportunity later on, before the Estimates were disposed of, of discussing them on the Appropriation Bill.

*MR. MORTON said that as it appeared that this would be his only opportunity of calling attention to various matters in connection with the railway service of the country he desired to take it. First of all he wanted to call attention to the necessity of sleeping car accommodation in third class railway carriages when that accommodation was provided on first class carriages.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE objected, on a point of order, to this question being raised on the Vote before the House.

*The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN said a discussion on that point would not be in order. He was aware that the hon. Member had already tried to insert provisions of that sort into Bills, but they did not arise now, and it was not desirable to discuss them.

*Mr. MORTON, on the point of order, urged that he was surely entitled to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he would not see that the public travelling third class had these facilities. Why should not the third class passengers have those facilities as well as the first class passengers?

*The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN said that under the Vote he was only entitled to discuss questions of administration, and not any proposals requiring legislation.

*Mr. MORTON said he had some further points to call attention to. The Board of Trade should protect the public against the railways and not shield the railway companies. These monopolies and concessions which were granted by Parliament to a company were supposed to be for the advantage of the public. The hon. Member for Dulwich complained that people "nagged" at these companies and objected to competitian, but what should we do in these days without competition? On the north side of London, where there was competition, the service was much better that in the south, where there was practically none.

*The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN observed that again the hon. Gentleman was referring to matters which could only be cured by legislation.

*Mr. MORTON said he was replying to the speeches of the President of the Board of Trade, and the Member for Dulwich.

*The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN said that it was not in order to discuss the question of competition if the policy advocated involved legislation.

*Mr. MORTON said that he would of course obey the ruling of the Chair, but he submitted that a humble man like himself had a right to discuss what right hon. Gentlemen had discussed; they were told by the late Mr. Gladstone that they were all on an equality in the House. They were told they must not "nag" these companies; but they required criticism. For instance, the condition of Ludgate Hill station showed the necessity for somebody besides the Board of Trade looking after these questions. They were told that last year the companies proposed to spend £40,000 on the station, and he was glad that they were beginning to do some work, but the public had not had any assistance from the Board of Trade in getting that matter attended to.

*The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN said the Board of Trade had no power in regard to the question of providing stations for a railway company.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE appealed to the hon. Member and the Committee to allow the Vote to be taken in order to give time for important matters connected with the Home Office Vote to come on, as arranged.

*Mr. MORTON said he was not prepared to give way unless assured that he would have another opportunity of raising the matters which he wished to bring forward.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE pointed out that the hon. Gentleman would, at any rate, have another opportunity on the Appropriation Bill.

*Mr. MORTON said he was not inclined to wait for the Appropriation Bill, and observed that he wished to call attention to a number of matters in order to get justice done. He remembered a very great man, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, telling them that it was not only the right but the duty of Members of this House to call attention to these matters, so that they might get their grievances redressed. This was his only opportunity of getting those grievances redressed. He hoped the Board of Trade in making their inquiries would consult other people besides the companies, otherwise they would have the right to say that the Department acted for the latter and not for the public whose servants they were. He would also like to call attention to the question of tube railways, of which he was in favour, because it was necessary to get people in, out, and about London as speedily as was possible. The construction of these railways had, however, been very expensive. Some years ago the Board of Trade said that in regard to these tube railways, where the trains ran every two or three minutes, they would not allow any physical junction, but now they had allowed a physical junction at Camden Town. This matter needed watching by the Board of Trade, and he was sorry that such a physical junction had been allowed.

*The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN said that obviously the Board of Trade had no control over these matters of the tube railways, power to do which would be contained in Act of Parliament. He had been listening attentively to the speech of the hon. Gentleman who had been speaking for a long time. He had been waiting to see if the hon. Member had any special grievance directed against the Board of Trade, but apparently he had not.

*Mr. MORTON said he had a special grievance, although he did not desire to be out of order in any sense or to take undue advantage of the opportunities allowed him by the rules of Order. He only regretted that some arrangement appeared to have been made that night in regard to other matters. [An Hon. Member: Made publicly.] No, made behind their backs with a view of depriving them of their rights as Members of the House. He would, however, say no more now.

Mr. R. DUNCAN wished to call the Chairman's attention to the fact that at ten o'clock when he was making some remarks, he told him that it was ten o'clock, and he was not in order in continuing.

*The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN said the hon. Gentleman must have misunderstood him. He said the hon. Member's remarks were not in order. He said nothing about the clock. He did not intervene to stop the discussion.

Mr. R. DUNCAN said it was rather a painful position when a Member was compelled to appeal to the House from the Chair itself. He had asked, pointing to the clock, whether it was a case of the clock, and was told so. ["Order, order."]

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolution to be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £128,735, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1908, for the salaries and expenses of the office of His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Department and subordinate offices."

Mr. MOONEY (Newry) said he was sorry that this Vote had come on so late in the evening, but it was no fault of theirs, and in spite of the declarations of the hon. Gentleman, there has been no underhanded dealing in this matter. It was announced that the Home Office Vote would be set down about eight o'clock, so that hon. Members might discuss other matters.

*MR. MORTON said he understood that the debate on the previous Vote would be adjourned at eight o'clock, and proceeded with on another occasion after the Home Office Vote.

MR. MOONEY said the only reply he could make to that was that the Irish Members were not responsible for the hon. Gentleman's understanding. He had placed on the Paper a Motion to reduce the salary of the Secretary of State by £1,000, but he was glad to say that an amicable agreement had been come to which was quite satisfactory from the Irish point of view, while at the same time it safeguarded the public interest, in regard to the affairs of Messrs. Kynoch, of Arklow. The terms of that agreement were in possession of the Secretary of State, who would no doubt make the House acquainted with the facts, because he repudiated statements that there was anything underhand in the arrangement. He had seen it stated that a personal attack was being made on the Secretary of State, but he wished to say emphatically that there was not a single Irish Member who would attack the Home Secretary, with his name and his record. When they saw a company going to Ireland, anxious to spend capital in that country, and doing something which they thought was going to stop the flow of emigration, it was only natural for them to do everything in their power to prevent that industry being suppressed, or to remove from the public mind any idea that there was an attempt to suppress that industry. He regretted that there did arise in connection with the Arklow factory the idea that certain inspectors of the Government had taken action against that factory which they would not have taken against an English company in like circumstances. Perhaps that feeling was wrong, but still it was there. The agreement come to had entirely removed that impression from their minds, and under these circumstances he only rose to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman, and he did not intend to move the reduction standing in his name.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.) said he quite accepted the statement that in any action which the hon. Member and his friends thought it their duty to take there was no personal feeling with regard to himself involved. In a similar strain he could only say that, so far as Messrs. Kynoch were concerned, he had not been animated by any feeling of hostility or prejudice against them. In his judgment he had a very clear public duty to perform, and he had discharged it to the best of his power. In these matters it was always desirable, if they could, to come to a settlement which was consistent with public duty and with the public interest. As his hon. friend had said, his Department had come to an arrangement with Messrs. Kynoch. As this was a matter of considerable public importance it was not desirable that he should content himself with announcing the fact that a settlement had been arrived at. He would, therefore, put the House in possession of the terms of the settlement. The conditions which had been accepted by Messrs. Kynoch were these—

"Messrs. Kynoch agree to withdraw their appeal to the High Court and to accept the decision of the Essex Quarter Sessions. They will write a letter to the Chief Inspector of Explosives undertaking not to use mercuric chloride, or any ingredient which has a masking effect on the Abel heat test, and generally to observe the terms of their licences. Messrs. Kynoch to indicate to the Home Office the explosives now under seizure in the magazines which contain mercury, and to hand them over to the inspectors to be ultimately dealt with as the Committee appointed jointly by the War Office and the Home Office may recommend. The Home Office agree that the cases now pending against Messrs. Kynoch shall be withdrawn. That all explosives not containing mercury shall be released, and that the magazines required by Messrs. Kynoch for trade purposes shall be cleared of their present contents—namely, the explosives seized under the Act, by concentrating the seized explosives in such place or places as may be approved by the Chief Inspector."

Those were the terms on which this matter had been settled, as he believed, in the public interest and to the advantage of everybody concerned. He could say with the utmost frankness and confidence that His Majesty's inspectors had never shown any partiality in the discharge of their duties—duties which they had performed admirably and without fear or favour and with great advantage to the country. Within the scope of their duties His Majesty's inspectors would be at all times glad to advise and consult Messrs. Kynoch or any other public company concerned in the manufacture of explosives with regard to the due development of a legitimate business. As far as he was concerned, he fully appreciated what had been said. He had been in that House twenty-seven years, and his views about Ireland were well known. Perhaps he had been somewhat unfairly accused of an apparent desire to do some injury to what had been, and he hoped would always be, a thriving industry in Ireland. That recalled to his mind that twenty-five years ago his first legislative child in that House was a Bill called the Arklow Harbour Bill. That Bill, of which he was in charge, was a Bill for the benefit of Arklow. It provided a Treasury grant of £15,000 for the improvement of Arklow harbour, with a further loan of £20,000 or £30,000. He hoped his hon. friends opposite would therefore realise that his connection with Arklow was not wholly a bad one. He might explain that the settlement did not go beyond his own Department, and had nothing whatever to do with other Departments which might be concerned in the manufacture of explosives, such as the War Office or the Admiralty. As far as his own Department was concerned this was the conclusion they had come to, and he hoped it was a satisfactory one.

SIR F. BANBURY (City of London) said a flattering tribute had been paid to the right hon. Gentleman and all his family; they were most excellent people; the hon. Member had employed exactly four and a half minutes to say that, and had then sat down. Then came the right hon. Gentleman who had eulogised hon. Members below the gangway, and said everything that was pleasant—that an agreement had been come to, and the agreement was satisfactory; and then he too, sat down. Surely, merely for this, there was no reason why the Board of Trade Vote should have been passed. What was this sudden agreement which had been arrived at between hon. Gentlemen below the gangway and the right hon. Gentleman?

MR. GLADSTONE: I have not made any agreement at all with hon. Members below the gangway. I stated expressly that the agreement was between Messrs. Kynoch and my Department.

SIR F. BANBURY: Apparently hon. Members below the gangway are acting for Messrs. Kynoch.

MR. MOONEY said they were not acting for Messrs. Kynoch, nor had they any interest at all in Messrs. Kynoch, who were free to make whatever bargain they liked with the Government.

SIR F. BANBURY said he thoroughly understood that. What he meant was that hon. Members represented the constituency in which were the works of

Messrs. Kynoch, and they were anxious that the works should be continued there. The right hon. Gentleman had continued those works in Ireland.

MR. GLADSTONE was understood to say that so far as his Department was concerned, the agreement at which they had arrived on this matter had no reference to the continuance of the works at Arklow.

SIR F. BANBURY said he could not understand what all this shaking of hands was about. He saw no reason why the important debate on the Board of Trade Vote should have been hurriedly concluded in order that this short statement might be made. He was interested neither in Kynoch's nor in Ireland, but he was interested in the safety of His Majesty's sailors and soldiers; and if, in order to please hon. Gentlemen from Ireland, orders for ammunition were to be given to a firm which apparently had taken a course to prevent the proper testing of their ammunition, he would most strongly protest. He did not think the Home Secretary had given a satisfactory answer or a proper explanation of what he had done in the matter. He understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that the appeal had been withdrawn.

MR. GLADSTONE said he was much obliged to the hon. Baronet for giving him this opportunity of explaining the matter. He thought that before the hon. Baronet imputed motives to him and charged him with actions which might bear serious and dangerous results he should at least have made himself acquainted with the elementary facts of the case. Any one who had followed the case knew very well that upon his instructions and responsibility a prosecution had been instituted against Messrs. Kynoch for a certain infringement of the law, and that judgment was given against them and confirmed at quarter sessions. Messrs. Kynoch appealed to the High Court, and delay occurred in hearing the appeal; and in the interval it was not possible to follow up the prosecution. What the Home Office wanted was a clear admission by Messrs. Kynoch that they had infringed the law; what they wanted was prevention of a repetition of the offence with which the firm was charged. Messrs. Kynoch had withdrawn their appeal, and in so doing had admitted the justice of the action taken against them; they had given the Home Office everything that was wanted by an undertaking that they would not in future put the unauthorised ingredient, chloride of mercury, into their explosives, that they would not put in any ingredient that would have the effect of masking the Government test, and that they would strictly observe the terms of the licence under which they were allowed to manufacture. Was anything else wanted? That had been his object from the first, and with that he would have been contented months ago. Messrs. Kynoch chose to fight the case before the law, but had now consented to accept the decision of the Court, pay their costs, and pay their penalties, giving an undertaking that the offence should not be repeated.

SIR F. BANBURY asked if that undertaking was not given in the old licence.

MR. GLADSTONE said there was no undertaking, but the licence prescribed certain conditions and Messrs. Kynoch did not observe them.

SIR F. BANBURY wished to know what guarantee they had that Messrs.

Kynoch would not do the same thing again.

MR. GLADSTONE said that Messrs. Kynoch all through had contended that they had not infringed the terms of their licence, but they had now given up that contention. The Home Office claimed that a certain construction must be put upon the terms of the licence, and Messrs. Kynoch had now accepted that construction and promised to abide by it. The Home Office had now got all they wanted. Messrs. Kynoch, though perhaps late in the day, had acted in a proper spirit. He had been made the target of uncomplimentary remarks from gentlemen connected with the firm, but to that he was indifferent. He had given the House the terms of the agreement, and he challenged any hon. Member to say what more he could have done in the public interest and for the maintenance of the law.

*MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis) said that in his judgment if the right hon. Gentleman had insisted on unconditional surrender, and if the case had been carried to the Appeal Court, the Government would have had the decision of the Appeal Court instead of the decision of the other Courts which Messrs. Kynoch had already described as ludicrous. In any case there were one or two uncertain features about the agreement, respecting which he would like to ask a few questions. He wanted to know whether the agreement which the right hon. Gentleman had made in any way bound the Admiralty and the War Office?

MR. GLADSTONE: No.

*MR. BELLAIRS said there were about 3,000 tons of this stuff in our Navy and Army, and if the decision of the Committee which Messrs. Kynoch had agreed to accept was against the contractors who supplied it, the Government should be free to sue for the money which had been paid for the cordite. He wished to know whether the evidence given before the Committee and the Report would be published. His third question referred specially to the Home Office. Did the contract leave the Home Office free to proceed against the contractors for fraud? Messrs. Kynoch now acknowledged that the chloride was an illegal ingredient, and it was put in by order of the directors and the management. Clearly the Home Office should proceed in some way against the contractors for fraud. Messrs. Kynoch would now plead that they yielded in this agreement to the force of the great majority of Liberals in this House. Only two days ago Mr. Arthur Chamberlain, addressing a meeting of the shareholders at Birmingham, indicated clearly the view that his company was the victim of politics, crushed between the hammer of Radical intolerance and Cecilian indifference:—

> "Last year he congratulated them on their latest victory over a Radical slanderer, but the Radicals had never allowed them to forget that they had a political vendetta against them. And just at this time their old wounds had broken out afresh and were now bleeding. By reason of the re-opening of the question by the cases of two of their Ministers, Lord Portsmouth and Lord Tweedmouth, they were not in the humour to do justice to a Chamberlain. . . . On the other hand Kynochs suffered from the coolness of the Unionists because they believed the chairman to be tainted with Radical views in the matter of licensing and tariff reform. At the last general election he freely used his money and poor influence to secure the return of the Radical opponent to the Hon. Evelyn Cecil, and though he failed to prevent his election, the effort was not likely to make him *persona grata* to those who supported the Cecil family."

That showed very clearly the line that would be taken by Kynochs Ltd. in reference to to-day's agreement, namely, that the Government used the political forces in this House, the vendetta as Mr. Arthur Chamberlain called it. Messrs. Kynoch had agreed to accept the Report of the Committee which the right hon. Gentleman in conjunction with the Secretary of State of War had appointed, but what did Mr. Arthur Chamberlain say of that Committee? He derided the Committee as being the reverse of impartial, as it included the Government experts. He said—

> "Was it not perfectly evident that if the Home Office inspectors who had been so bitter against them thought they had the ghost of a chance of disproving these statements they would have been as eager for arbitration as the company were? The fact that they refused arbitration was to anyone who had ever watched 'Pretty Fanny's ways' a proof that they had no case."

He imagined that "Pretty Fanny" in this case was his right hon. friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department. The threat in regard to the removal of the works from Ireland was raised in 1900 in order to obtain a larger share of contracts, and it was raised again to-day. Messrs. Kynoch had threatened to remove from Arklow unless they got larger contracts. Mr. Arthur Chamberlain's explanation of how the manufacture of cordite was lost to Ireland in 1902 was the difficulties placed in the way of the Irish manufacture. He stated further that when the manufacture of cordite was taken away from Ireland and given to England, Arklow began to sink into the state of poverty and starvation from which it used to suffer. What was the real state of the facts? At Arklow in 1900 a quantity of cordite was rejected because it was full of physical impurities, because the chief inspector of explosives reported that it contained a large quantity of stones and nails. These things might have been put in through the malice of the workmen, but obviously it was the duty of the inspector to reject all that cordite. In 1902 the cordite was rejected because it could not pass the heat test which was the only test they possessed—as Messrs. Kynoch well knew—to protect from destruction our soldiers and sailors and the men who worked in the mines of the country. They deliberately with the connivance of the directors masked the heat test by using mercuric chloride. That was the whole truth with regard to Messrs. Kynoch. They removed from Arklow because the cordite manufactured there was bad. But there were even more serious indictments against the firm in regard to other matters. They had been found fault with because the cordite which was rejected by the Home Office Inspector managed to find its way out of the country. The harbour by-laws of all port authorities prohibited the export of explosives which had been rejected, but this cordite was sold to the Japanese.

The hon. Gentleman was proceeding to allude to the cause of the disastrous magazine explosion in the Japanese battleship "Mikasa" when, it being Eleven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next.

Committee also report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

BRITISH NORTH AMERICA BILL.

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; read the third time, and passed.

Adjourned at five minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 28*th June*, 1907.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Canal Tolls and Charges (New Junction Canal) Order Confirmation Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 14) Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 13) Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

PETITIONS.

WEEKLY REST-DAY BILL.

Petition from Harlesden, and other places, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION.

Copy presented, of Return of Advances made under the Irish Land Act, 1903, during the period from 1st November, 1903, to 31st December, 1905. Vol. I. Part II. [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC WORKS LOAN BOARD.

Copy presented, of Thirty-second Annual Report (for 1906–7), with Appendices [by Act]: to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 226.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

English Small Holdings Bill—Suggested Extension to Ireland.

MR. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, with a view to arresting national deterioration and promoting the growth of a healthy people, he will advise the extension to Ireland of the principle of the English Small Holdings and Allotments Bill, namely, that the county councils be invested with powers to acquire, by compulsion if necessary, suitable lands for the establishment of small holdings of from five to fifty acres, not exceeding the annual value of £50; and whether he is aware that the Waterford County Council on the 11th instant passed a Resolution urging the extension of the Bill to Ireland.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Government do not propose to extend this Bill to Ireland. The operations of the Congested Districts Board and the Estates Commissioners, as well as those of the local authorities under the Labourers Acts in regard to small holdings and allotments, will afford sufficient scope in Ireland in the direction indicated for some time to come. It is very doubtful whether the finances of Irish counties would be able to bear further burdens such as might be imposed by the Bill, but in any event it would be desirable to wait and see the result produced in England before applying the principle of the Bill to Ireland.

Boycotting of Mr. Payne, of Fohenagh.

VISCOUNT TURNOUR (Sussex, Horsham): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he has official information to the effect that Mr. Payne, of Fohenagh, dare not walk outside his own residence without an escort of police; whether he is aware that Mr. Payne was attacked last week by a crowd of young men and women; that he is refused provisions in all the surrounding towns; and that his workmen refuse to work for him; and whether, in view of this evidence of the existence of a conspiracy against Mr. Payne, what steps does His Majesty's Government intend to take to vindicate the law of conspiracy and the liberty of the subject in Ireland.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) It has been found necessary to afford police protection to Mr. Payne when he goes to his grazing farm at Fohenagh, but it is not the case

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

that he dare not leave his residence without protection. On the 10th instant Mr. Payne was groaned at by some women and boys, but was not personally attacked. The police at once suppressed the disorder. Mr. Payne has been refused supplies in two shops. Four men who occasionally work for him have lately declined to do so, but he has got the work done otherwise. There is no evidence which would justify a prosecution for conspiracy in this case. The law is being enforced whenever evidence is available, and full protection is given to Mr. Payne's person and property.

Reorganisation of the Militia.

VISCOUNT TURNOUR: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether early intimation will be given to those Militia battalions which are not included in the 101 which are to be retained.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The selection of Militia battalions which are to become the 74 third battalions and the 27 fourth or fifth battalions is now being prepared. Intimation will be given as early as possible of the result.

Medical Examination of Immigrants into Australia.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): To ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will say what method is used to prevent the landing of persons affected with pulmonary consumption in the Commonwealth of Australia; and will he supply fully the details of any legislation existing on this subject.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) Under the Commonwealth Immigration Restriction Act, 1901, any person suffering from an infectious or contagious disease of a dangerous character is a prohibited immigrant, and may be detained for the purpose of medical examination by any officer entrusted with the administration of the Act for a period not exceeding twenty-four hours, in such place and in such custody as he thinks fit. The Secretary of State has no information as to the exact method in which the examination is conducted, but will ask the Governor-General of the Commonwealth for a Report, if the hon. Member desires.

STATUTE LAW REVISION BILL [LORDS].

Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 259.]

TELEGRAPH (MONEY) BILL.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [21st June], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Which Amendment was—

> "To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, and add the words 'it is undesirable to authorise further capital expenditure upon telegraphs or telephones until a full statement has been presented to Parliament showing the financial results of the past working of the Post Office telegraphs and telephones judged from the standpoint of an ordinary commercial undertaking,"—(*Mr. Harold Cox.*)—instead thereof.

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

SIR F. BANBURY (City of London) said that when the debate was adjourned last week he was pointing out the large amount of capital which might be spent upon the postal telegraphs and telephone services if this Bill became law without the Amendment of the hon. Member for Preston being accepted. As far as he could gather, the actual amount spent on telegraphs and telephones was about £15,000,000 sterling. It was now proposed to spend another £6,000,000, and in the year 1911, when the National Telephone Company was taken over at the capital value of £10,000,000, there would be £31,000,000 invested in the postal telegraph and telephone service. Up to the present time no allowance had been made for depreciation in the accounts kept by the Post Office for telegraphs and telephones. A large sum of money ought to be set aside for that purpose every year, the plant being likely to deteriorate very quickly. It was self-evident that wires exposed to all kinds of weather must deteriorate very much. The hon. Member for Brighton who had had considerable experience on these matters had asked the Postmaster-General whether the Government were going to issue this £6,000,000 all at once, and the right hon. Gentleman had replied that they were going to issue about £1,500,000 each year and spread the whole amount over four years.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said the amount would be issued from time to time in small sums and would not go on the public loans account at all. In no one year probably would the amount exceed £1,500,000, and it would not go on the public market at all.

Sir F. BANBURY said that meant that money which would be used for other purposes in other Departments would be taken for telegraphs, and although there was no direct issue there was practically the same thing, because money would be absorbed which would be used under other circumstances for other purposes. The hon. Member for Brighton was a stalwart Radical, and a man with considerable financial experience, and therefore his opinion ought to have weight with the Postmaster-General. He did not think they ought to do anything which would depreciate the money market, and the only way to prevent that was to stop these issues. The best course to take would be to carry this Amendment, especially in view of the fact that the right hon. Gentleman considered that for the present year £1,500,000 would be sufficient. The Amendment simply asked that business methods should be applied to the Post Office. He realised the difficult position of the Postmaster-General. On the one hand, the public demanded telegrams and telephones for as little as possible, and on the other hand the postal employees demanded better conditions of employment. Both these demands were difficult to resist, and consequently there was a very great loss to the State. He was very glad that the hon. Member for Preston had brought this Amendment before the House, because it gave an opportunity of impressing upon the people of the country that they could not give all these benefits to employees in the public service at the same time and cheap telegraphs and telephones without causing a loss to the State. The hon. Member for Bradford had said he would oppose the Amendment because, in his opinion, the only way in which a business could be properly managed was that it should be under the control of the State. He disagreed with that argument, and the hon. Member had given a very bad illustration. At the present moment the National Telephone Company was paying a dividend, while the Post Office telegraphs and telephones were paying nothing at all.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: The telephones are paying.

Sir F. BANBURY said that at any rate the telegraphs were not paying. The receipts from Post Office telegrams were supposed to pay the interest on the capital and leave a surplus, but it was now admitted by the Postmaster-General that the telegraph service was being carried on at a loss. He thought it would be a wise thing to accept the Amendment, because it would show whether the right hon. Gentleman was correct in saying that the telephone service was being carried on at a profit. He hoped the House would make quite certain before passing the Bill that there was a real necessity for spending such a large sum of money. For the reasons he had given he should support the Amendment.

*Mr. CHIOZZA MONEY (Paddington, N.) said the hon. Baronet opposite had asked the Postmaster-General to treat this matter from a business point of view. Whatever the right hon. Gentleman did in the matter he trusted that he would have regard to the true principle upon which a Government Department should always be conducted, and that was that it should be carried on from a national point of view. The hon. Member for Preston, who represented the dying creed of individualism in this House, invited them to agree to an Amendment calling upon the Post Office to present a statement drawn up from the standpoint of an ordinary commercial undertaking. Now what was that standpoint? He would give an instance: Occasionally he had to use a tube railway which used to be called the Twopenny Tube, but he understood that they were now going to charge three-pence. Why were they going to do that? Because the shareholders were not content to accept profits which provided them with 4 per cent. interest.

SIR F. BANBURY said it was not a case of the shareholders being discontented with the 4 per cent. dividend. The fact was that the company were afraid that they would not be able to maintain a 4 per cent. dividend.

*MR. CHIOZZA MONEY said that surely it was not contended that such a charge ought to be made for telegrams as would yield a profit of 4 per cent. in relief of Imperial taxation. If the Postmaster-General was guided by the principle on which railway companies conducted their undertakings, he would not only refrain from charging to revenue the cost of sites for new buildings and the cost of extensions, but he would charge such things as tarpaulin covers to capital account. The figures given for last year showed a deficit of £754,000. Of that sum £742,000 was represented by capital expenditure charged against revenue, in connection with which the Government Departments concerned did not come to Parliament for power to raise money by loans as would have been done in the case of a railway company. That meant a net loss of £12,000. The total loss on telegrams was put down at £290,000. Taking the amount at £300,000, it meant a loss of about three farthings on each telegram. In other words, it meant that the public were getting a sevenpenny telegram for sixpence. Every time they used a telegraph form they got something rather under the cost price which had to be made up from other accounts. It should not be forgotten that a good deal of profitable business was conducted by means of telegrams, and therefore it was clear that they were making up for this loss in another way. What would an ordinary commercial undertaking do in these circumstances? In the case of the Twopenny Tube the company said, "Our railway will no longer pay at 2d., and we will charge 3d." A sixpenny telegram would not pay. In fact a telegram at that price would never have been reached at all if the business had been conducted on ordinary commercial lines, and telegrams instead of being 6d. would have been more like 9d. or 1s. It would certainly mean £2,250,000 more for telegrams, reckoning the commercial charge as sixpence more, because business telegrams were an absolute necessity, and if a monopoly were granted to a company for telegrams the commercial community would have to pay the charge whether they cared to do so or not. It came to this, that if the telegraph business were in private hands, the public would lose £2,000,000 a year as compared with the present position. The telegraph system should be regarded from a national, and not from the purely commercial point of view. If it was regarded from the national point of view the loss entirely disappeared. There were other gains resulting from the telegraphs being a national service. The workers connected with the telegraph or the Post Office had at anyrate security that when their health left them after they had given good service to the State they would not be left penniless in their declining years. There was no happier feature of the Returns published year after year than the pages which recorded the payments made to male and female servants who, after having worked for the State for a greater or lesser number of years were provided for by the State in this way. Even his hon. friend the Member for Preston, whose courage was undeniable, had not the courage to say that the telegraph should be handed back to a private undertaking. If the hon. Member and his supporters had not the courage to make that proposal he thought they should withdraw their Amendment.

MR. C. E. PRICE (Edinburgh, Central) said the right hon. Gentleman, when stating in reply to a Question that no arrangement had been come to with the Corporation of Edinburgh in regard to the underground system in that city, had asked him to use his influence with the city council with a view to authority being granted to use Princes Street. He did not think that any influence he could use would have any effect in that direction, because the placing of underground wires under Princes Street would destroy what was regarded as one of the finest streets in the world. Several other routes had been suggested, some of which were very wide of the mark. The proposal to take the wires through the North British tunnel was, he understood, the latest. Another suggestion was that they should be laid in George Street. He thought that was a feasible suggestion, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would assent to it. George Street was parallel with Princes Street, to which it was very much nearer than the Thames Embankment was to Parliament Street in Westminster. That would involve very little deviation from the course which the Post-Office authorities wanted to take. He was anxious that the matter should be pressed forward without delay, for in Scotland they suffered in some parts from snow storms which cut off towns from any communication with the outside world for three days. He was anxious that the underground system of telegraphs should be carried even further north than was at the present time contemplated. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to give a satisfactory answer.

Mr. NOLAN (Louth, S.) said he was in favour of the theory that the Post Office and the telegraph system ought to be looked upon as institutions carried on for the public convenience, rather than as business undertakings carried on for profit. At the same time he was glad of the opportunity afforded by the mover of the Amendment of drawing public attention to a matter which had already been privately brought under the notice of the Postmaster-General without effect. He held that there was something radically wrong in spending large sums of money in the erection of post-office and telegraph-office buildings and in paying employees, and then impairing their utility by closing those offices against the public at the very time they were likely to prove of the greatest importance. The case to which he wished to draw particular attention was that of Drogheda, the chief town in his constituency. Drogheda was a town with a tidal port, the trade of which had been injured by a private monopoly in the shape of a railway company to which statutory powers had been granted. That railway company had used those powers to divert a large portion of the traffic which naturally belonged to Drogheda to other ports, and placed it at a serious disadvantage. While Drogheda was handicapped in this way, the Department of which the right hon. Gentleman was the head stepped in last year and closed the local post office at 8 p.m., instead of 10 p.m., as had been the case. That was done without consultation with the people of Drogheda or their representatives. When notice of the change was given the Mayor of Drogheda, the Corporation, the Harbour Commissioners, and all the other local bodies protested against it. But all to no purpose. The office was closed at 8 p.m. on some frivolous pretext, rather than on solid grounds, on the advice of a few officials whose opinion seemed to weigh more with the Department than the opinions of all the local representatives put together; and this disadvantage was added to those under which the town was already struggling. He wished to illustrate his meaning. Drogheda was a port from which large numbers of cattle were shipped. The men engaged in that trade were well known as honest, intelligent, industrious men who led a strenuous life in a very critical, uncertain business. One of those men might have to turn out at four or five o'clock in the morning, and spend the whole day in selecting, judging, and buying his cattle, and getting them by rail and road to the boat. The port of Drogheda was, as he had said, a tidal port, and the trader could not tell how he stood till he got his lot on board. If he could not do this before eight o'clock he could not wire his instructions, under the new rule, to his customers in, say, Liverpool, Manchester, or other markets except at an additional cost of 2s. per message for being after hours. In other words, a man who had been working hard for possibly sixteen or seventeen hours at a laborious and anxious business in which his own money, and perhaps borrowed money, was invested must, if he had half-a-dozen messages to send, pay 10s. or 12s. more than he had paid under the old system. Hon. Members might perhaps think that a small matter. But it was no small matter to the traders—men who after all their hard work and after risking their money did not know till their sales were effected whether they were going to come out at a profit or a loss. He thought it was a monstrous thing that a man under these circumstances should be forced to pay even 10s. a time at the caprice of the officials of a great public Department. Then, to add to the absurdity of the whole thing, it appeared that of three ports—Newry, Dundalk, and Drogheda—under similar conditions, which were all threatened with this treatment, an exception was made of Newry. He had no objection to any favour bestowed upon Newry, but why should the distinction be made? Unless justice was done in this matter he would feel bound to make his protest against the Department of the right hon. Gentleman on every available occasion.

MR. BOWLES (Lambeth, Norwood) said he had waited with great interest for some sign of any real reply to the argument of the hon. Member for Preston in support of the Amendment. In his opinion that argument was unanswerable. The hon. Member said that they were being invited to invest £6,000,000 in a concern which ever since it had first begun had been worked at a loss, and an increasing loss; and that when a demand was made on the House of Commons for such a large sum it was not too much to ask that they should be informed as to the real character and nature of the position. The Postmaster-General and the hon. Member for North Paddington had expressed extremely novel views in regard to the business of working the telegraphs and telephones. They said that it ought not to be regarded from a sordid but from a national point of view. They were here dealing with a real loss of £1,000,000 per annum, and the hon. Member for Paddington said that so long as the loss fell on the country as a whole it was not a loss but a gain.

MR. CHIOZZA MONEY said he did not say it was a gain. He recognised that there was a loss, but it was a loss incurred in the interests of the community.

MR. BOWLES said that, although the loss of one million golden sovereigns fell on the whole community, it did not make any difference to the fact that it was an absolute loss. It was perfectly true that telegrams were carried at a loss, but there was also no doubt that the gain was to those who sent them, who were mainly wealthy people or commercial firms who were perfectly able to pay full value for the services rendered to them. Persons in that position got more than the value to which they were entitled at the expense of the poorer classes of the community. The theory of the hon. Member for Paddington was fantastic. To come to the Bill itself, he was bound to say that it contained every defect which it was possible for a Money Bill to have. If it were true of any Bill it was particularly true of a Money Bill that it ought to be definite. It was impossible to tell from this Bill the amount of money which was required, the time within which the money would be spent, or the purpose to which it was to be devoted. It was true that the amount to be raised was limited by the Bill to £6,000,000, and that the Postmaster-General had stated that he proposed to spend it before 1911 on the telephones. Why was not that stated in the Bill? As the Bill stood the money might be taken out within half an hour of the Bill becoming law, and there was no security in the Bill that it might not be spent on telegraphs as well as on telephones. If the right hon. Gentleman meant that he was going to take £1,500,000 every year for four years, why did he not say so in the Bill? In fact, what the right hon. Gentleman asked the House to give him was a blank cheque for £6,000,000. That was a very dangerous proposal to lay before the House of Commons. There were not many matters on which he had the advantage of agreeing with hon. Gentlemen opposite; but there were two principles which were on the forefront of their political creed in which he was in complete agreement with them. Hon. Gentlemen opposite boasted of being the patrons, if not the inventors, of economy and the sworn foes of every form of privilege and monopoly. Now, if ever there was a Bill which violated those principles directly, it was the Bill under discussion. From the point of view of economy this £6,000,000 of capital expenditure was to be voted on a Friday afternoon, and afterwards to be absolutely withdrawn from discussion. The £6,000,000 was to be raised by the purchase of terminable annuities, which were to be paid off every year by moneys voted by Parliament; but it would be perfectly impossible to discuss the matter effectively because the liability would have been entered into and would have to be met. The money would perpetuate what he believed to be one of the most mischievous, most useless, and most dangerous of monopolies. A private monopoly was bad enough, but a State monopoly was very much worse, especially one which was run not at a profit, but at an increasing loss. The Postmaster-General said that he was only going to apply the money to telephones. The dealing with the telephones in this country was one of the most extraordinary chapters in our commercial history. They were able to institute an absolute and real comparison between State ownership and management and private ownership and management of telephones, and the facts were illuminating. On the one hand, there was the State with a full command of State privileges and powers, running a telephone system for years, and producing accounts which did not in the least represent the true state of the case, mixed up as they were with the telegraph and postal accounts. But they knew that they involved the loss of £1,000,000 to the country. On the other hand, they had a private company engaged in exactly the same business, relying not on State credit, but on their own, and it was found that that private company presented accounts on a commercial basis which showed the real position of affairs and that, at any rate, there was a profit to the shareholders, and that the service which they rendered to the community was at least equally as good as that rendered by the Postmaster-General. Whatever profit the right hon. Gentleman was entitled to, it was quite obvious that he was not entitled to count as profit money which he received from the National Telephone Company, whose rival he was. He did not see how the counting of money received from the Telephone Company as profit could be defended. The right hon. Gentleman, as representing the Post Office, no doubt had a monopoly. Personally he objected to all monopolies and thought they were bad and mischievous, but he could understand a monopoly being defended which through the profits it earned gave some relief to the people in regard to taxation; but what he could not understand was a State monopoly which involved the people in a standing, heavy, and increasing loss. That surely was a fantastic course which the House of Commons ought not to encourage. The right hon. Gentleman said in effect that he and his predecessors had raised some £5,750,000 of capital to spend on telephones, and he now asked the House for £6,000,000 more, a sum greater than the amount spent on the telephone system up to date, and an amount greater than had ever been asked for in a single Bill; and he asked it at a time when the proofs seemed to show clearly that no Government, with the best will in the world—and that their will was good, and that their energy was great he did not desire to deny—was inherently capable of conducting a vast commercial concern without inflicting injury and mischief upon the commercial community of the country. If this Bill was to be persisted in, he thought it was absolutely essential that they should be given a clear, definite, and commercial account of the working of the system. It was surely not too much to ask that they should know where they stood. The charge against the right hon. Gentleman was that without giving them any proper account he was asking the people of the country to give £6,000,000 to an enterprise which was not doing well. It was not fair to ask them to embark such an amount of capital in a business which was not doing well, and therefore he hoped that the House would accept the Amendment.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) remarked that the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken stood forth as a champion of private monopoly and complained that the Postmaster-General sought to obtain a monopoly of the telephones and telegraphs in connection with the Post Office. From his point of view, however, he took it that these services should be public services, and in his opinion no private individual should have been allowed to begin to conduct either the telephone or the telegraph service. The hon. Member seemed to labour under a delusion that all private companies were the best managed companies in the world, and that those who dealt with them had no complaint to make. His experience, however, was in exactly the contrary direction. His experience was that up to a certain date, and until there seemed to be a chance of the State taking them over, the telephone companies did exactly what they liked. Even if there was a shower of rain in some cases he had known the service to be stopped, and the companies charged what they liked. In Ireland things could not be worse than they were under the private companies, and it was obvious if anyone would analyse the matter why that was the case. In his judgment the work ought to be done much better by the Government, at a lesser capital outlay, and with less expenditure than it could be done by a private company. In the United States it was quite true that the system was one of private companies, but in Denmark, Norway, and other countries the system was not dependent upon private enterprise, and the results were much better than anything which we obtained in this country. On that point he agreed that they were entitled to some further explanation as to how this money was to be expended and to the details of expenditure and income. But he did not agree with the hon. Member that the telephone service was always going to be a losing concern, because he thought that with increased facilities they would have an increased business up to a certain point. He believed it was essential that the telegraphs and telephones should be in the hands of the Government, even if up to a certain point there was a loss upon them. These facilities should be provided for the commercial community at large in these days of keen competition to enable them to carry on their businesses. An hon. Member had alluded to the condition of affairs in regard to telephones in Dundalk and Drogheda, and he agreed with what he said because he knew the district, and, having heard the complaints over and over again, he had special knowledge of the subject. In his opinion the cost of telegraphing and telephoning ought to be reduced, and the State ought to give more facilities to the commercial community than they did. He appealed to the House to pass this Bill after an explanation from the right hon. Gentleman, provided that the explanation was fairly satisfactory, because he held as a democratic principle that all these public utilities ought to be worked in the interests of the public by the State, and that all so-called monopolies like railways, the Post Office, the telegraphs, and the telephones ought to be conducted in the interests of the State and the community at large. He was therefore prepared to vote with the right hon. Gentleman provided he promised a certain amount of facilities. The hon. Member for Norwood, he thought, was a member of the Public Accounts Committee, and in his capacity as a member of that Committee he would have an opportunity of revising the various expenditures made under the Bill. He agreed with the hon. Member that all these public accounts certainly did not receive the attention in the House which they deserved, and which they ought to have. It was quite true the Government very often invited them to rush into expenditure which they did not think was proper, and that anyone who made the slightest objection was called an obstructionist. In his view the House, having the power of the purse, ought, either through Ministers or the Public Accounts Committee, to have control over the money they voted, and they had a right to examine every proposal for expenditure which came before them. Under these circumstances he asked the right hon. Gentleman when he replied to give them the fullest information in regard to the accounts that he could.

MR. J. D. WHITE (Dumbartonshire) also considered that they were entitled to have a little more information. He wished to know how far the money was to be allocated to telegraphs and how far to telephones. That was a very important distinction, as he understood that in the case of telegraphs no allowance was made for interest on capital, but that in the case of telephones such a charge was included in the accounts. He therefore thought it important that the House should know how the money was to be allocated as between the telegraph and telephone services.

*MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said he had explained exactly how the money was to be spent. It was to be spent on telephones.

MR. J. D. WHITE said he was glad to have that explanation, but it would have been advantageous if they had seen it expressed in the Bill.

*MR. SYDNEY BUXTON, in reply to the hon. Member for Edinburgh, said that he had been in communication with the town council in regard to underground wires. He thought the council ought to have given way on the question, but they thought they ought not, and there the matter remained. In reply to the hon. Member for Louth with regard to the post offices in Ireland which had been closed at eight instead of at ten, he had made inquiries as to the amount of business done between eight and ten in the towns referred to, and it was so infinitesimal that he did not see how any substantial injury could be said to be done to the towns in question. If the hon. Member desired it, however, as he gathered he did, he would look into the matter again, although he was afraid he could not hold out any hope of altering his decision.

MR. NOLAN asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would not take into account the local representations which had been made on the subject. In regard to the inconvenience of closing the telegraph office at the earlier hour he was informed it inflicted a large amount of injury on a deserving class of the people.

*MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said that of course he had taken those representations into consideration, but he had also taken into account the receipts at the post offices between eight and ten, and the amount of those receipts was so infinitesimal that he could not conceive that the closing of the offices at the earlier hour could cause any serious damage to the locality. However, he would look into the matter again, and if the hon. Gentleman could furnish him with any further facts and figures he would give them attention.

They had had considerable debate in regard to this Bill, and he ventured to say at once, as representing the Post Office, that he welcomed the debate and he welcomed the light which had been thrown upon the position which hon. Members wished to take up in regard to the work of a public Department such as the Post Office. In regard to the question of accounts and figures, he would like to say they had nothing to conceal, and he would be glad to accede to the suggestion that the accounts placed before the House should be put in a more clear and lucid way than they were at present, so that he "who runs may read." Especially he would like hon. Members to be able to see the two things which he had always desired to separate, the telephone and telegraph services separately set out, because he was sure that, while the accounts as to the telegraph would show a loss, the accounts as to the telephones would show that they were being run at a fair profit. He would, therefore, ask the House to allow him to consider the question of accounts when he had a little leisure, and he would promise to do his best to see that in a subsequent account presented to Parliament a distinction was made between the different branches of the service to the extent, at all events. that the figures should be separate. The hon. Member for Norwood was probably not aware that there were already accounts in the Postmaster-General's Report which did attempt to show the accounts of the telephone service apart from the telegraphs.

He welcomed this debate also for the reason that the House had supported the Postmaster-General against the Committee of the Whole House. Nearly all the speeches made on this and on the previous occasions were speeches in favour of economy, and had an additional zest in that they were attacking a public Department. Having been present on both occasions, he could not help contrasting the mood of the House now with what it was a few weeks ago on his Estimates. Then the whole of the speeches were in favour of a reduction in the postal charges or in favour of additional expenditure in these various branches. There was an instance just now in the speech of the hon. Member for Edinburgh, who had urged him strongly to extend the underground wire to various parts of the west of Scotland. That, no doubt, was a good thing, but it was also an expensive thing; it might be even a necessary expenditure, but it was not remunerative expenditure. Then there was a suggestion from the hon. Member for Canterbury for cheaper telegrams. In these matters the Postmaster-General was between two fires. On the present occasion hon. Members attacked the Post Office for want of economy and for unbusinesslike habits, and on the Estimates because it was niggardly in its expenditure, and carried on its work too much on business lines. He was not sure whether some hon. Members who took part in this debate did not attack him on both grounds. He was, therefore, glad to have the support of the House on this occasion. In connection with the whole question of postal and telegraph expenditure, he agreed with the hon. Member for Paddington that these matters would be regarded from two points of view. It had to be regarded not only from the business point of view, but also from the point of view of public convenience. The business view had sometimes to give way to public convenience. But none the less he did not think any of these large services ought to be carried on at a loss.

He thought the hon. Member who moved the Amendment, and also the hon. Member for Norwood, had somewhat obscured the issue before the House by discussing at considerable length and mixing up the position of the telegraph and telephone question. He did not think the position of the telegraph system was relevant to the Bill.

He had admitted when moving the Bill that the telegraph service had been carried on at a loss, and the hon. Member who moved the Amendment, and the hon. Member for Norwood, attacked him very strongly on that ground, and argued that a large business of this kind ought to be carried on under different conditions. That being so it was only fair to examine the ground on which that charge was made, and to see whether the Postmaster-General and the Post Office were responsible. When the charge was made against the Post Office of carrying on the telegraph service at a loss his withers were unwrung. The thing was done before he took over office. But he was deeply concerned in the reputation of the great office over which he presided, and he proposed to give the House to the best of his ability an answer to the charges which had been brought against the Post Office as a business concern. The blame with regard to the telegraph service should really fall on the shoulders of the House of Commons, to whom he would say, if he could address it as an individual, "Thou art the man!" It was the House itself that rendered it impossible for the Post Office to carry on the telegraph system at a profit. The original capital expenditure was excessive, owing to the purchase of the telegraphs being effected on terms in accordance with a Report of the House.

MR. HAROLD COX asked whether the terms were not originally proposed by the Post Office.

*MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said the terms asked were, after considerable negotiation, submitted to a Committee, which inquired into them and recommended their acceptance.

MR. HAROLD COX said that those terms were proposed by the Post Office in order to buy off the opposition of the telegraph companies.

*MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said that a Committee of the House of Commons confirmed the opinion of the Post Office and the Treasury, and agreed to the terms. Apart from the capital the three main items on which there was loss were the reduction of telegrams to 6d., free delivery of telegrams, and the cheap rate given to the Press. The loss involved in the cheap rate to the Press was disputed by those representing the Press, but the Post Office believed that the estimated loss of £250,000 was a fair and accurate one. The particular concession of repeated telegrams to different addresses in every part of the Kingdom at the 2d. rate was given by Act of Parliament and was not in accordance with the views of the Post Office then. The 6d. telegrams were forced on the Post Office in 1883, at a time when, in the opinion of the Telegraph Department, its financial position was not sufficiently strong to bear the loss involved. It was resisted by the Postmaster-General and the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the day, but the House defeated the Government on the matter and insisted upon having 6d. telegrams, which had also been a very great element in the unfortunate financial position in which the Telegraph System found itself. Not only did it involve an actual loss, but it also involved an immediate additional expenditure of £500,000 for further wires, increased staff, and so on. It would probably be of interest to the House to know that, while at that time each telegram produced a revenue of about 1s. 1d., at the present moment each telegram produced a revenue of 7½d. only. Free delivery, too, had increased from originally free delivery for a mile, to three miles. All this had involved a very considerable reduction in the receipts of the Post Office, and was largely due to the pressure brought to bear by the House on the Postmaster-General of the time. Then there was the question of expenditure. Wages at the Post Office had largely increased of late years. He did not regret that, because he thought the Post Office ought to be a good employer, but he would point out that there had never been any pressure by the House in the opposite direction, while the increases which had been given were largely the result of the pressure of the House of Commons.

He thought it was only fair to the Post Office, and it might be rather advantageous to the House, that they should know who was the real culprit. It was not the Post Office, but the House of Commons. Unfortunately there it stood. The telegraph service was not a financial success, but he did not think the Post Office could be blamed for that, when they were handed over a service bought at an inflated price, when their revenue had, from time to time, and against their wish, been seriously curtailed, and when their expenditure had risen very largely. But he ventured to say that, if they put aside the telegraph service, the rest of the postal service was carried out on business lines, efficiently, speedily, and well. He believed it was carried out, on the whole, to the satisfaction of the country, and as well as any private company could do the work.

With regard to the Bill actually before them, he had to repeat that it followed, word for word, two previous Bills dealing with the same matter. It was merely a continuation Bill, the object of which was to raise a further sum to carry them on to 1911, when it would be the duty of the Government of the day to purchase the National Telephone Company's system. It was true, as had been said, that they had, when they sat on the other side of the House, always opposed the system of loans; but he would remind his hon. friend that this particular telephone capital was always excluded from the animadversions which were made on loans for Army and Navy purposes. His hon. friend the Member for Brighton seemed to be under an apprehension that they were going to raise the £6,000,000 by one loan. They were not. It would be raised over a period of four years, in small portions at a time, by short term annuities of fifteen years, and it would be taken by Public Departments.

MR. RIDSDALE (Brighton) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman meant the Post Office Savings Bank.

*MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Yes, chiefly. It was impossible to anticipate, in regard to such a service as the telephone service, what was the actual amount that they would want in any one year, and that was one reason why the sum was not put on the Estimates. The mover of the Amendment had animadverted on the fact that they were putting too many years life on the various plant; but he would point out that the life of the machinery of which he spoke was only put at twelve years and that nearly the whole of the plant in London was underground, which of course increased its average life. The estimate they had placed on it was not excessive.

A comparison had been made between the position of the Postal Telephone System and that of the National Telephone Company. But he believed—and he thought the figures went to show—that they were earning interest on the capital, and they were providing a very substantial depreciation as well as a fair balance. It was perfectly true that the National Telephone Company were earning a larger interest than they were, but it must always be remembered that the National were the first in the field and that they took the cream of the business. They absorbed practically all the important users in London and had a monopoly in most of the large provincial towns, and the Post Office were left with the remaining and less profitable business, especially in the provinces. Still, though they had had to work under very disadvantageous circumstances, he was glad to say that, on the whole, they showed a substantial profit. It was their business, as a Public Department, to meet the convenience of the public in this matter, and they extended their telephone system not always, for the moment, on a paying basis, but with an eye to the future.

*MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked whether the telephone charges to France were to be reduced.

*MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said he thought his hon. friend knew that they were working to reduce them, and the foreign telephone system was being conducted so that a reduction might be made, and they hoped to get increased business which would continue to return them a profit.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON: As long as we know that the rates are to be reduced.

*MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said there was one point in connection with the National Telephone Company, and it was this. They got their revenue from the rates charged, which were paid in advance. The revenue amounted to something like a million of money, of which the Company had the handling for carrying on their business at a profit. This enormously helped them. But the unfortunate Post Office's revenue was immediately intercepted by the Treasury, and they were not allowed the handling of it like the Telephone Company. He doubted if the Treasury were entitled to have the money, but the point clearly showed the advantage which the Company had in earning profit.

He desired to say emphatically, however, that he wished, and the Post Office wished, to carry on the telephone system at a reasonable profit. In the first place, he thought a Public Department ought to be carried on at a reasonable profit but not at an unreasonable profit. He would be very sorry to agree with his hon. friend the Member for Preston that they should pay dividends such as the National Telephone Company paid. If they paid interest and the sinking fund and made an additional profit on the working, he thought they would be doing enough as a Public Department, and he would be very sorry if the proposition of his hon. friend were carried out and they were put on the same business basis as the National Telephone Company. But as far as he was concerned, and as far as the Post Office was concerned, if the House would support them, they were desirous of carrying on the telephone system on the basis he had already stated. He was glad, therefore, in regard to the whole matter, that they should have had this discussion, because it would enormously strengthen his hands and the hands of his successors in the conduct of these matters. He had lately been revising and adjusting the rates, and the advantage given to the small user must, to some extent, be at the expense of the larger users. When the rates became known there was sure to be an outcry on the part of the larger users. If and when that occurred, he hoped that hon. Members, remembering that day's debate, would, when they received memorials and suggestions for lower rates for the larger users of the telephones, refrain from pressing them upon him, but recollect, as they had affirmed that day, that the telephone system ought to be kept as a profit-earning undertaking, and not trouble the Postmaster-General. He asked the House to allow the continuance of the annual expenditure on the telephone service, and he could assure them that, as far as he was concerned, his only desire was that it should be so worked that there should be a proper and reasonable development of public revenue.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.) said he was in substantial agreement with the Postmaster-General, and did not rise to offer any opposition to the Bill; he desired rather, if he might, to contribute something to the very interesting discussion on the Amendment. Certain hon. Members had spoken of what should be the limits of activity of a Government Department, and what should be the principle applied to the management of its business. He thought he held a somewhat middle position on the question. He was not prepared to say, with some of his hon. friends behind him, that no public body, Government Department or otherwise, ought ever to be made a business undertaking; he was certainly still less prepared to say that when it was made a business undertaking it ought to be managed only on business principles. The hon. Member for Paddington had delivered an attack on the hon. Member for Preston, but he thought that the hon. Gentleman was forgetting what the Amendment was. It was not a demand that the business of the telephones and the telegraphs should be carried on by the State exactly as it would be by a company working for profit. Whatever their opinion was as to the lines on which these undertakings should be managed, whether by the Government, or by municipalities, they must all desire that the accounts should be accurately kept so as to show the state of affairs to the managing body, in this case the House of Commons. They should be in a position to know what they were talking about, whether they were making a profit or a loss, and be able to trace to its source the loss or profit, if they desired to do so. He was very glad to hear what the right hon. Gentleman had said as to his willingness to give further consideration to this matter, and to see whether, by consultation with others outside his Department, or with his advisers in the Department, he could arrive at a more satisfactory statement of the accounts. He confessed that he was only a bird of passage at the Post Office; he only stayed there a year and a half. In the course of that time he looked into the question, and he admitted that it puzzled him how the right hon. Gentleman could state the accounts in reference to the telegraphs, having regard to all that had gone before. It was quite true that an enormous amount had been paid out of revenue on the telegraphs, which in the case of an ordinary company would have to appear in capital account until profits were made upon it and it was written off. Having regard to the way in which these accounts had been treated in the past, and to the fact that the long purse of the taxpayer had been behind the undertaking, he thought it would be very difficult to trace out all that had happened so as to present a balance sheet for the current year with a capital account attached to it, such as a decently managed company would necessarily produce every year of its existence. But in any case he thought that the Postmaster-General would be successful in regard to the telephones. They were likely to become a very big concern indeed, but their history at present was happily a brief one, and he thought that it would be of the utmost advantage to the Postmaster-General and to the House—and not merely to the right hon. Gentleman, but to his successors—if, in the early days of the undertaking, an effort were made to give an actual and business-like statement of the accounts. There were some great undertakings of the nature of monopolies which, if they could assume that they would have good, honest, skilful, and courageous management, would be better carried out by a public authority than by any private company, and if there was one undertaking more conspicuously than another coming within that class, it was the telephones. The hon. Member for Norwood and others had said that they were not in favour of State management even in this case, though the hon. Member for Norwood very properly said that his speech was not in favour of monopoly; he was against monopoly, whether in the hands of the State or any public authority or anybody else. But what was the alternative? It was competition. That was the idea on which the telephone first came into being. Competition, however, might produce hopeless confusion. If they had six different companies within the area of London, each with 10,000 subscribers, but without any means of communication between the subscribers of those different companies, they would be much worse off than if they had a monopoly with only 30,000 subscribers all of whom could communicate one with another. But that was not all. A gentleman, whom he hoped he might call a friend of his, had told him that in his earlier days he had been manager of one of the small telephone companies in London. They were very short of money, as was not unusual with companies in the early stages of their development, when the public were not quite certain whether the enterprise would be remunerative. His friend set to work to study what could be done in London, and he rapidly arrived at the conclusion that there were certain strategic points, and that the people who got the wayleaves over those strategic points commanded the development of the great areas of London. Accordingly he devoted what resources his company had to acquiring those strategic points, and then he went to his directors and said—"Now I am in a position to carry out a large and lucrative development if you will provide me with the resources; but there are only two courses open to you, and you must either raise so much more capital or you must sell, and I will put you in a good position to do either." The directors decided to sell. What did that mean? It meant that the value of their property was not in the wires but in the wayleaves which they had got, and which gave them the command of the traffic. In the case of certain districts of London, the National Telephone Company now represented all those companies which they had bought out, by paying through the nose, in order to extinguish a competition which was useless as a service to the people of London, but which perhaps in some cases, where it was astutely managed, as it was in this instance, by the gentleman he had spoken of, might have proved very lucrative to the promoters who disposed of their property in those early days. It had been often said that the companies were formed for no other purpose but to be bought out, and with no prospect of success; and when it was alleged that the National Telephone Company's capital had been unduly watered hon. Members ought to remember that the policy of the House of Commons in setting up this open competition had been largely responsible for the inflated price that had to be paid before a single system could be made. This, then, was essentially a subject-matter for monopoly, and he thought that the Government was the only suitable body to hold it. But he did not think that when it undertook a commercial business it should run it at a loss, and he could not see why in matters of this kind the taxpayer should be expected to provide a service for the minority who used it without exacting in return some reward beyond the bare interest or sinking fund of the capital. There were monopolies like the water supply. He had spent most of his life in Birmingham, and in matters of this kind he was an advocate of the Birmingham principle. Water was one of the necessities of life, and it ought to be supplied at the cost price, but the moment they touched electricity, elecric lighting, or gas, then he thought they ought not to be content with barely paying expenses, and they ought to secure for the municipality in return for the risk of capital and cost of management a contribution in aid of the general taxation or rating of the community concerned. He would apply that principle to the whole of the postal service. He did not think the argument of the hon. Member for Paddington that they should continue losing a penny on each telegram would bear examination for a moment.

*MR. CHIOZZA MONEY said he did not defend the low price of telegrams. On the contrary, he would like to see telegrams charged at a higher rate than they were. He was only concerned to show that the alleged loss was not an actual loss to the community as a whole, and to protest against the gross exaggeration which had been used in regard to the financial position of the service.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he was glad to hear that admission from the hon. Member. He was inclined to think that when he came to consider the arguments he had used he would feel that he would like to modify some of them. In one sense it might be said that there was no loss to the community, but there was a gain to the individual at the expense of the community. He did not see why they should be expected to incur that loss for the benefit of the individual. Having regard, therefore, to the way in which the telephone service was used, he thought that there was a certain obvious unfairness in giving that service below cost price to those who could afford to pay for it, at the expense of the taxpayers who were less able to pay. This loss, however, was not the fault of the Post Office officials. It had been due to the steady pressure of the House to lessen the cost of the charge to the public while increasing the remuneration given to the employees and increasing the services rendered to the public. As long as the House of Commons pursued this tendency unchecked they would prevent the Government from earning a revenue. He made one qualification, however, of his general statement that these services should pay. One of the reasons for giving the Post Office and the telephones to the charge of the Postmaster-General was to afford a better service to the poorer districts, where it could not in all probability be remunerative. Private enterprise picked up the plums of a business and left the poorer districts without a service. The Postmaster-General had in the main, therefore, to come in and do the work in the matter of telephones which the National Telephone Company had left undone as being unremunerative or less remunerative. It was true that the telegraph system must remain unremunerative unless the House of Commons was willing to abolish some of the privileges which it had forced the Postmaster-General to concede. It was also true that the development of the telephone had a detrimental effect on the revenue from the telegram. As the Postmaster-General was the owner of both, he thought that in calculating his charges from the telephone the right hon. Gentleman must take into account the extra loss which he was incurring on telegrams by reason of his own competition with himself. He did not intend, however, to oppose the Bill; but the right hon. Gentleman was mistaken in supposing that the Opposition had always drawn a distinction between telephone and telegraph expenditure and naval and military works. The distinction was illusory. Great defensive works were as much a proper subject for expenditure of capital as any work of the Post Office. The construction of barracks were the provision of an asset with a life as long as the telephone wires. He entered upon these criticisms not as opposing the Bill, but by way of recognition that the principles of the Government were less rigid now than they had been in Opposition. He congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on the modification of these principles to what he believed in this case were the public wants.

*MR. MEYSEY-THOMPSON (Staffordshire, Handsworth) said that he wished to add a word in appreciation of the very able and lucid explanation which had just been given by the Postmaster-General. He thought that the thanks of everyone interested in economy with regard to public expenditure were due to the right hon. Gentleman for his support of the Amendment. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that almost every argument he had used told in favour of the Amendment. Did the right hon. Gentleman really anticipate that the same pressure would not be brought to bear with regard to telephones as he had explained had already been the case with regard to telegraphs? If so, he was certainly not so sanguine as the Postmaster-General. It was perfectly clear from the statement of the right hon. Gentleman that a Government service such as the telephones, telegraph, etc., owing to Parliamentary pressure in favour of increasing the cost and decreasing the profits of such services, never had paid, did not now pay, and never could pay. He should therefore support the Amendment.

MR. FORSTER (Kent, Sevenoaks) said that he would not have intervened in the debate, but for one observation which fell from the Postmaster-General. He said that the rates had been lately under revision. That was a subject which interested him, because during the tenure of office of the late Government he had acted as the Chairman of a Departmental Committee which consisted of representatives of the Post Office and the Treasury appointed to consider the question of telephone rates, and had been irresistibly driven to the conclusion that in the interests of the telephone service the days of the flat-rate system were doomed. It did not require any detailed examination of the problem to discover that the flat-rate, whilst it might confer great advantages upon those who used the telephone to a very large extent, could not be defended from the business point of view by the Postmaster-General. He hoped that when pressure was brought to bear upon the House of Commons by those who were now enjoying the advantage, hon. Members would stiffen their backs, and in the interests of the public service maintain a proper attitude. He was pleased with the answer which had been given by the Postmaster-General on this point.

MR. HAROLD COX said that, the Postmaster-General having met him handsomely on the question of accounts, he would ask leave to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

VISCOUNT TURNOUR (Sussex, Horsham) said there were one or two points upon which he wished to question the Postmaster-General. The right hon. Gentleman had gone very much into detail as to how the money was going to be spent, but they had not had a very full account of the method adopted to make the telephones under the Post Office a financial success. Was the system going to be extended to the rural districts? A most instructive comparison could be drawn between those countries where telephones were under State control and our own. Probably the Postmaster-General would be prepared to admit that the French system, which was under State control, was very inefficient, and complaints had been made even during the present year in the French Chamber. Probably there was no better telephone system than that in the

United States, and in New York in particular. It was very efficient and punctual, and in every way an admirable system.

Attention called to the fact that forty Members were not present. House counted; and forty Members being found present—

VISCOUNT TURNOUR, continuing his speech, said there was a point to which he desired to call attention in connection with the telephone system of the State of New York. On more than one occasion the question whether the State of New York should take the telephone system into its own possession had engaged the attention of the Legislature of that State, and it had always been decided in the negative, from the fear of having to add between 50,000 and 100,000 to the State employees. He was glad to say that the fear under that head was nothing like so great in this country as in the State of New York, but at the same time it was a matter which should be considered before the House rushed through a Bill of this kind. It was a question which opened up vast possibilities. He had no objection in principle to State telephones, but he was opposed to anything which would encourage the extravagance and the evil results which had followed from the system of State telegrams in this country, and if he thought this Bill was going to lead to more extravagance and inefficiency than in the past he would certainly vote against it. What were the conditions on which the Post Office would allow telephones to be started in the rural districts? What guarantee would be asked from localities before the telephone service was provided? Had the Postmaster-General taken any steps to find out whether telephones could be made to pay in the rural districts? From the Consular Report on the trade of Germany for 1906, he found that the increase in the telephone facilities there during the last five years had been enormous. In the Imperial telephone area in 1901 there were 2,157 local telephone exchanges, while in 1906 there were 4,062, or an increase of 88·3 per cent. On 31st March, 1906, there were 510,831 telephone stations, being an increase of 106·2 per cent. on the number at the corresponding date in 1901. He believed it was the fact that those responsible for the management of the telephone system in Germany had shown more enterprise than had been shown by our post office. They had shown a disposition to provide the facilities first, and rely on development following. They had not been so niggardly in granting telephone facilities to country districts as the British Post Office had been. It had been pointed out in the course of the debate that telephones generally were more for the convenience of the wealthy and the well-to-do, and of corporations and institutions, than for the convenience of the poorer classes. He thought it would be wrong for the House to pass any Bill which would make it harder in the future for rural districts to get telephones than it had been hitherto. He was sorry it was ever decided to take over the telephones. Unless things mended very considerably, he was not at all sure that they would not find in the future that the whole of the Post Office receipts would be swallowed up by the deficits in the telephone and telegraph systems The question whether they were justified in taking over the telephones was one which could not be gone into at present, but the right hon. Gentleman could be asked to give some guarantee that when there was need of it the telephone should be extended in country districts, if it was likely to prove a financial success.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley) called attention to a case near his own home in Scotland, in which the cost of digging a trench for telephone purposes was three and a half times that of a similar trench dug by private enterprise. That happened on an estate where time sheets were carefully kept, and it was known exactly how many men were employed and how much money was expended. If Post Office work was to be done in that way all over the country the sum of £6,000,000 would represent a much smaller amount in effective work than it ought to do. He hoped the Postmaster-General would be able to give an assurance that the maximum care would be taken to see that the money was not wasted.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.) said it seemed a very serious thing that on a Friday afternoon a practically empty House of Commons should be prepared to vote away the enormous sum of £6,000,000 for this purpose. The Liberal Party were constantly talking about the great need of money for social reforms, and yet they were prepared recklessly to vote away £6,000,000 on telephones. He had all his life strongly objected to telephones. He believed they were a perfect nuisance. He believed that more impropriety of language was engendered by the use of the telephone than by any other instrument ever invented. He admitted there were differences of opinion as to the use of the telephone. In his constituency one district was very anxious to obtain the use of the telephone, and he had appealed over and over again to the Postmaster-General in the matter. He asked the right hon. Gentleman what part of the £6,000,000 would go for the provision of the telephone for Ireland, and he further appealed to him to give a pledge that Donaghadee would not be forgotten.

*MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said he would look into the case mentioned by the noble Lord. If the facts were as stated it was obvious that there had been considerable neglect. He could not promise the hon. Member for North Down that a complete telephone system would be provided in his own district, but he undertook that Ireland should have its fair share of the money spent on telephones. In regard to the extension of telephones in rural districts, he expressed approval of the view that the system should be considered as a whole. He had laid down the proposition, to which he thought the House assented, that a fair profit should be paid on the system considered in its entirety. The more populous and richer districts ought to pay for the smaller traffic and receipts in rural districts. The Post Office had been extending the system a good deal in the rural districts, and the guarantee required had been reduced from a half to one-third.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): Will the right hon. Gentleman say how much will be spent in placing the wires underground?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I am afraid I cannot say off hand.

Main Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to a Standing Committee.

AUSTRALIAN STATES CONSTITUTION BILL [LORDS].

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Churchill.*)

SIR F. BANBURY said this Bill, though no doubt a very good one, was extremely complicated, and it was almost impossible for any layman to understand it. The Memorandum said—

> "The object of this Bill is to simplify and make uniform the provisions of regulating the reservation of Bills passed by the Legislatures of New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia, and Tasmania."

That conveyed very little to the mind of the ordinary Member. He gathered from the first clause that, except in regard to certain Bills, the assent of the Crown was to be abolished. The clause provided that—

> "There shall be reserved for the signification of His Majesty's pleasure thereon, every Bill passed by the Legislature of any State forming part of the Commonwealth of Australia which (a) alters the constitution of the Legislature of the State, or of either House thereof; or (b) affects the salary of the Governor of the State; or (c) is, under any Act of the Legislature of the State passed after the passing of this Act, or under any provision contained in the Bill itself, required to be reserved."

He could not understand what was meant by sub-section (c). He understood that the sub-section had been put in by the desire of the Commonwealth of Australia. If a Bill contained a provision requiring that it should be reserved for the assent of the Crown, he did not see why the Commonwealth should wish to have sub-section (c) in this Bill. Apparently if the provision which he had quoted had any meaning at all, it was that we were going to pass a measure which reserved to the Crown the right to over-ride that Bill, and, therefore, that rendered the Bill totally unnecessary. There were other clauses in the Bill which to him were perfectly incomprehensible, and he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would explain them when he came to reply. He and his friends had no wish to oppose the passage of the Bill if it was to do any good, but they did not want to pass a Bill which practically over-rid itself.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.) said that the Bill was introduced to simplify and regulate the procedure with regard to the reservation of Bills passed by the different States of the Australian Commonwealth. The Australian Constitution Act, 1842, which was applied to New South Wales, reserved to the control of the Crown all Bills which affected electoral institutions, the Constitution of the Colony, or the salary of the Governor. In 1850, an Act was passed which applied to the legislative councils of Victoria, Van Dieman's Land, now called Tasmania, South Australia, and Western Australia the provisions of the Act of 1842. The Act of 1850, further provided that Bills altering the law concerning the election of members to the councils were to be specifically reserved, and under that Act all the five Colonies affected had passed local Constitution Acts, three of which had been confirmed by the Imperial Government and two had not been confirmed, though they were still in force. There was one other layer of legislative difficulty and confusion. In 1859, an Order in Council extended a Constitution to Queensland and applied to Queensland the Acts of 1842 and 1850 in regard to reserved Bills. The Crown, of course, always had the right to signify that any Bill should be reserved for the assent of His Majesty ; but in practice a great many measures were not reserved, and the Governor was authorised by legislation not to reserve certain Bills. This Bill codified what Bills the Governor was to reserve and what he was not to reserve, and a discrimination was made between measures which fundamentally altered the Constitution of the States or affected the salary of the Governor and those which dealt with electoral matters. If Bills dealt with merely electoral matters they need not be reserved, but if they altered the Constitution or affected the salary of the Governor they must be reserved. The existing state of the law was most confused, and questions arose repeatedly as to the validity of certain Acts passed. The law officers of the Crown in different Administrations had taken the view that although Bills dealt with purely elective matters they must be reserved, while the Colonial law officers, especially those of New South Wales and Victoria, had taken the other view very strongly. By this measure they settled the dispute once for all. They also by Clause 2 of the Bill removed all doubt as to the validity of any previous legislation. He need scarcely say this measure would never have been presented if it did not carry with it the assent of all the Colonies. The provisions were the regular accepted principles of our colonial system, and the whole of the Australian States earnestly desired that the Bill might be passed with reasonable and convenient speed.

MR. FORSTER said that this Bill, while not very plain on the face of it, was really intended to clear up points of difficulty which had arisen, and which often arose when gentlemen of the legal profession were called upon to deal with the same question. It appeared to be the case that the law officers of the Crown here took a different view from the legal advisers of some of the Colonial Governors on constitutional points at issue. He was sure that it was the unanimous wish that this House, while reserving to itself the power to examine closely the measures submitted to it, should not stand in the way of the passage of a Bill which had been shown to be needed. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman had thrown some light on the necessity for producing this Bill, but there were some questions connected with it on which the right hon. Gentleman had not touched. One of these was contained in Section 2, which stated, as he understood, that it was intended to give validity to Bills which had been passed by the Colonial Legislatures and as to which there was a doubt as to whether they ought or ought not to have been reserved for the consideration of His Majesty. That seemed to him to open up a rather wide question, viz., whether a Bill which ought to have been reserved for the sanction of His Majesty, and was not so reserved, had in reality the force of law in the Colonies. It therefore seemed to him that the passing of this measure became a matter of most urgent necessity. They had it on the authority of the Attorney-General that there were actually in force in Australia measures which ought not to have the full validity of Acts of Parliament.

MR. CHURCHILL said that it was just that confusion and doubt which the Bill was designed to deal with.

MR. FORSTER said that in that case the passing of the Bill was more urgent than they had been led to suppose at first. Might he ask how many of these Acts of the Australian Parliaments were in actual operation at the present time as to which the doubt of their validity applied? Was it only a question of one or two here and there? He could hardly understand how it had been possible for this state of things to arise. How had it happened that Bills which ought to have been reserved for the signification of His Majesty's pleasure were not so reserved? He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to give the House rather fuller particulars on that point; and possibly the Attorney-General might make a useful contribution to the debate.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) said that this was a matter which ought to have been dealt with by the late Government, and it brooked no delay. He knew that all the Governments in the Australian States were anxious that the Bill should become law. There was only one matter open to question, and that was the clause reserving Bills which dealt with the salaries of the Governors of the States. For his part he thought that the different States had a perfect right to decide what the salaries of their Governors should be, including all the allowances attaching to them. He was certain that the States would never do anything in that regard with which anyone in this country would find fault. It would be far more dignified to trust completely the States on that matter, and he thought that that clause in the Bill should be dropped.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrews Burghs) said that having had some experience in Australia he wished to support the Bill; he knew that all the Australian Governments were agreed that the measure was a good one and should be passed. It would put an end to doubts which had arisen, and were prejudicial to all the Colonies, and the sooner those doubts were got rid of the better. This was more the case, when they remembered what good work the Australians did for us in the South African War.

VISCOUNT TURNOUR said he could not understand why successive Governments had neglected this matter hitherto; and it was high time that a remedy was provided. Subsection (b) provided that "it shall not be necessary to reserve a Bill for a temporary law which the Governor expressly declared necesary to be assented to forthwith by reason of some public and pressing emergency." He believed that that subsection was a proper one, but it should be made sufficiently definite. Was there such a thing in the English constitution as a temporary law? Doubts might arise as to what was a public and pressing emergency.

VISCOUNT HELMSLEY (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) asked whether or not the discretion of the Governor was to be entirely taken away by the Bill, or whether the Governor could reserve one or other of the measures specified if he thought it advisable to do so.

MR. CHURCHILL, replying by the leave of the House, stated that the Bill was drafted in the form in which it was agreed to by all the Australian States. The hon. Member for Clare had referred to the provision concerning the salary of the Governor, and it had, he confessed, occurred to him that it did seem a little queer when it appeared in black and white. It looked as if we were nervous that the Colonies would not make proper provision for their Governors. But as the drafting of the Bill had been assented to by the whole of the Australian States, he thought it was better to adhere to the groundwork and plan of the measure although perhaps it was based upon an old-fashioned system. In the past, differences which arose on legal points could only be resolved in the Courts, and great inconvenience might arise when statutes were tested in the High Court. Fortunately, nothing of the kind had arisen, because it had been the practice from time to time to pass through the British Parliament Bills to validate legislation about which there was a doubt. In 1892 they had an Act passed to confirm certain Acts of the Colonial legislature, and in 1901 the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham carried through a similar Act in regard to Queensland and Western Australia. The Government thought it was much better to clear up these matters once for all, and this Bill would prevent in future an accumulation of Bills of a doubtful type, MR. RAWLINSON (Cambridge University) inquired whether this Bill would in any way interfere with the discretion of the Governor of the Colony to reserve Bills, and whether the retrospective legislation which appeared in Clause 2 would validate more than the Bills contained in the Schedule. If any other course was intended, he would like to know to what other Bills this measure would apply. If it did not apply to other Bills its meaning should be made more clear.

MR. CHURCHILL said the clause was general in its character. The Governor would be bound by his instructions as to what Bills he should reserve. He would also be bound by the law, and this Bill would be the law in future. He might also be bound by any special instruction from His Majesty through the Secretary of State.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House for Monday next.

EVIDENCE (COLONIAL STATUTES) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. CHURCHILL, in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, said that it was a somewhat more simple but no less important Bill than the preceding one. At present in English Courts colonial laws were treated as if they were foreign laws for the purpose of proof, and they had to be proved by the oral evidence of a qualified expert. This was a cumbrous process, and an inconvenience, especially in view of the extending business between the Colonies and this country, which was hampered when every colonial law had to be proved in Courts of justice in the same way as if it were a law relating to France or Germany or some other foreign State. The question first came up through the acquittal of a man in England, charged with embezzling his wife's money, on the ground that the Married Women's Property Act had not been proved to have been made effective in Australia. In February, 1905, the Governor, then Lord Northcote, at the instance of the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth, brought the matter to the notice of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, then the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's, Hanover Square. Later on the Commonwealth made a formal complaint in regard to the awkward position in which they stood in this matter. They pointed out some of the anomalies which resulted from the present state of things, and asked the Government of this country whether they would not introduce the legislation required to make the Courts of the United Kingdom take cognisance of colonial Acts. At the time the law officers of the Crown were of opinion that it was undesirable to force English Courts of Justice to take cognisance of colonial statutes, though there would be no objection to facilitating their proof. The late Lord Chancellor also had doubts. The late Secretary of State looked at the question from a different point of view, and saw in this a clear colonial grievance, and thought that if we on legal and technical grounds refused to redress that grievance there would be disappointment felt in these powerful possessions of the Crown. The right hon. Gentleman was in the act of consulting with the legal authorities in England as to the desirability of some such legislation as this when the Government ended, and the election took place. The present Government had not allowed the question to fall to the ground, but had taken it up where the right hon. Gentleman had left it. The present law officers saw no objection and the Lord Chancellor had concurred in the suggestion. Their plan was very simple. The Bill provided that colonial and Indian laws should be received in evidence in British Courts if purporting to be printed by the Government printer, without any other proof at all. The Bill also made it a felony to print or tender in evidence a false copy of such a law. That was the whole machinery of the Bill, and the Government believed that it would completely remove the grievance. The Bill might be extended by Order in Council to Cyprus and to British Protectorates at any time, if it was thought convenient and advantageous to do so.

LORD BALCARRES inquired why the Bill was not now to be extended to Cyprus.

MR. CHURCHILL was understood to reply that Cyprus was a British Protectorate but occupied a peculiar position. It had been under a liability to pay tribute to the Turkish Empire, which we now collected but which did not reach the British Treasury because we devoted it to paying interest on the Turkish debt.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

LORD BALCARRES said he agreed with the object of the Bill and thought that it should receive the assent of the House. He did not think, however, it should be passed without a certain amount of scrutiny. Two misdemeanours which might involve a penalty of five years penal servitude were created by the measure. One of these misdeameanours was printing a colonial statute without the authority of the Government, and the other was tendering the statute so printed as evidence in a British Court of Law. Evidently the second was the offence which merited the most severe penalties, but in regard to the first anyone who printed or re-printed a statute not necessarily for the purposes of fraud might be made liable to punishment. He did not think that was right, because colonial statutes had been printed and reprinted time after time in this country separately. He was concerned himself with the desire of the colonial Governments to have this Bill passed, but it went further than the actual statutes and seemed to him to refer to by-laws—say, of a railway company.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir JOHN WALTON, Leeds, S.) thought the noble Lord's point on examination would not constitute any obstacle to the measure. The object of the Bill was simply to apply the rule which at present prevailed in the Courts of law with reference to English statutes to the statutes passed in colonial legislatures. If an English statute was produced in an English Court bearing the imprint of the Government printer that was evidence; it was intended that the colonial statutes should be proved in the same way—that was, if any one produced a statute which purported to have been printed by the Government printer of the Colony concerned it should be received in evidence. Obviously they must guard against fraud. The printing of false copies was the first offence provided against in the Bill. A more atrocious crime could scarcely be committed, for these copies would never be printed without a motive. Let him take a case which might occur in this country. Supposing a statute was issued, purporting to have been printed by Messrs. Eyre & Spottiswoode, the King's printers, and it was not, that would be an offence here and was surely punishable. Another offence would be tendering in evidence a copy of such an Act with the false imprimatur upon it, knowing it had not been printed by the Government. He though that was a very serious offence, and in this regard he could not imagine a more serious one. The Government was bound to safeguard it in that way. It was exactly the same rule that existed in this country, and therefore, so far from altering the law, they were strengthening it.

SIR F. BANBURY said he did not quite agree with his noble friend on this matter. As he understood his point, it was that a printer might reprint copies of by-laws and instruments having a statutory force, for a legitimate purpose, and that for having done so might be liable to a penalty of five years penal servitude. But under this Act they would not be liable unless they put on the first page of the reprint that it had been reprinted by a Government printer. If it contained only the name of the person who printed it, no penalty would arise. Unless, also, he was very much mistaken this was only the maximum penalty. The whole penalty was not bound to be inflicted. The clause said—

> "He shall be guilty of a felony and on conviction shall be liable to be sentenced."

It did not say, "shall be sentenced." The offence was a very serious one, and if the Government passed a law to enable these documents to be taken as evidence in a Court, then they must see that the documents were authentic. The hon. and learned Gentleman had said it was already done in England, and that therefore the law ought to be extended to the Colonies. There was some force in that argument, but the United Kingdom was a small place. Everybody knew who the King's printer was, and even if they did not, as the noble Lord had said, they could easily send down to the library and see what the statute was. But if a document was printed in Australia or some British Colony, which it took three weeks to get at, then it was not quite the same thing. It was not at all the same to allow a document originating in England and a document originating many miles away to be cited in a Court of Law. This was the third Bill the Under-Secretary for the Colonies would have got since last night. There was really no objection raised to any of the right hon. Gentleman's Bills, but with regard to this he certainly had some apprehension, and it seemed to him that before it was passed a little more light should be thrown upon it by the legal luminaries who sat on the Opposition side of the House.

MR. MOORE (Armagh, N.) asked what was the position of the Colonies in this matter. Were they subject to the same disabilities there as we were here when we desired to prove a colonial statute? He would also like to know what was the position under this Bill of the Isle of Man. A distinction was drawn between the United Kingdom and its own Legislature and other positions of the British dominions with separate Legislatures and separate statutes. The Isle of Man for the purposes of this argument was within the United Kingdom, as were the Channel Islands, and what he wished to know was in what way the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man came into this Bill if their statutes had to be proved. He thought when dealing with topics of this sort there should not be a unilateral operation, but that the proposal should work both ways. He also thought that they might very well have the opinion of the Attorney-General upon the drafting of the Bill. In Clause 3 "Government printer" was specially defined. But there must be a record somewhere of the printers in the British possessions who were Government printers, and therefore persons in authority. He quite understood that by Section 1 a statute tendered under this Bill in a Court of Law would be good evidence, but the effect of putting in the definition clause appeared to be that before that statute could be proved evidence would have to be given that the name on the copy was that of a Government printer, and he thought that there would be as much trouble in proving that the person whose name was on the copy was a printer authorised as there would be in proving the Act. He thought that difficulty could be avoided by omitting the definition clause altogether, and by inserting some such words as "Any person printing an Act for the Government shall be deemed a Government printer."

LORD R. CECIL asked whether the Government desired this Bill to be considered by a Committee of the Whole House or one of the Committees upstairs.

MR. CHURCHILL said it would be referred to a Committee of the Whole House.

LORD R. CECIL said he was extremely sorry to hear it, because in his opinion this was eminently a Bill to be considered by the Standing Committee on Law. He agreed with the hon. Member for North Armagh, and also drew attention to the careless drafting of the second sub-clause, which made it an offence to print a word for word copy of an Act, while it was not an offence to print anything that was not a word for word copy of the Act. So that if a fraudulent copy was made no offence would be committed, but if an actual copy was made an offence would be committed. He knew that that was not in the least what was intended, but that was the wording of the clause. He had no doubt he would be told that the words followed the English statute, and he should think that that would be extremely likely, because many of the English statutes were very badly drafted indeed. He would have thought also that it would have been very easy to have discovered who the Government printers were without defining them in the Bill. He believed in all the legal libraries, at any rate, there was a collection of the Colonial statutes, so that there was not very much difficulty about that. The sub-section appeared to him to be as bad a piece of drafting as could possibly be imagined. It defined a Government printer as being first of all several things and then "or otherwise be a Government printer." He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would reconsider his determination and have this Bill considered by a Committee upstairs.

VISCOUNT HELMSLEY thought that the hon. Member for North Armagh had discovered a mare's nest, and he was very much surprised that the noble Lord behind him should have apparently agreed with the hon. Member's view. It, however, seemed to point to the question as to whether a man's name appearing on the print was sufficient proof that the printer whose name appeared purported to be a Government printer. He hoped that point would have the attention of the Government.

MR. CHURCHILL, replying to questions raised, said there would be no difficulty in establishing the fact of who was the King's printer, and evidence as to a true or perverted copy of an Act would be forthcoming from the Government office and from the offices of Agents-General, who all possessed copies of the Colonial statutes. In the Colonial Courts he understood the practice was to receive an accredited copy of an Act without requiring further proof. As to the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands, they were not considered Colonies, and this Bill was not intended to apply to them. It was only intended to apply to Indian laws, and to the laws of those parts of the King's dominions which came under the administration of the Colonial Office.

MR. MOORE said that that should be made clear in the Bill, because the Isle of Man was a British possession and did make laws of its own.

MR. CHURCHILL said he had intended that the Bill should be considered in Committee of the Whole House, but he realised that various legal points might be more conveniently discussed in Standing Committee, and as he most earnestly desired to meet the views of hon. and learned Members who took an interest in Colonial legislation, and in order to meet the views of the noble Lord, he acquiesced in the suggestion that the Bill should be considered upstairs, and therefore would not move that it should be committed to a Committee of the Whole House.

MR. FORSTER said he was glad that the right hon. Gentleman had made up his mind to send this Bill upstairs, because the whole debate had really been on Committee points, which would most probably be dealt with much better by a Committee upstairs than they could be some time after eleven o'clock at night, in this House. He thought the right hon. Gentleman, in the interests of the Bill itself, had come to a very wise conclusion. He was most anxious that the Bill should pass, because the right hon. Gentleman had made out a most convincing case. It was a monstrous state of things that any person who committed an offence against the law should be able to escape the consequences of his offence simply and solely because it had not been proved that the statute under which he had been convicted had been adopted by one of our possessions. He had one criticism, however, to make. The Bill proposed to deal with the practice of the courts of justice in this country. He was rather surprised, that being so, that it had been left to the right hon. Gentleman to justify rather than the law officers of the Crown. They all knew that the right hon. Gentleman was a man of the greatest ability and the greatest versatility, and was quite qualified to take charge of the whole of the British Empire, but he should have imagined that even the right hon. Gentleman would hardly feel himself qualified to fulfil the functions of the law officers of the Crown. Under these circumstances he thought it would have been better, that the Bill would have been better drafted, and its purpose better explained, if it had been drafted by the law officers of the Crown.

MR. CHURCHILL said the law officers of the Crown were responsible for it.

MR. FORSTER said it was a mere matter of detail, however, and he was glad the right hon. Gentleman had made up his mind to pass it into law.

CAPTAIN CRAIG (Down, E.) said the broad principle not touched upon so far was in Clause 2. He rather objected to the sentence of five years penal servitude, which appeared to him to be the minimum that could be given, and he hoped that in Committee some lesser punishment might be prescribed. He also suggested that something should be put in to safeguard the newspaper proprietors from liability for copying an Act and publishing it in the newspaper. As the Bill stood now any newspaper proprietor who happened to take a report of an Act made by a Colonial Legislature was liable to be held guilty of a felony. He hoped upon those two points that the right hon. Gentleman would see his way to make some concession.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to a Standing Committee.

CRIMINAL APPEAL (EXPENSES).

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it is expedient to authorise the payment out of moneys provided by Parliament of the salaries of the Registrar of the Court of Criminal Appeal and his staff appointed under any Act of the present session to establish a Court of Criminal Appeal and to amend the law relating to appeals in criminal cases, and of the expense of taking shorthand notes and of making transcripts in pursuance of such Act."—(*Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*)

SIR F. BANBURY said he wished to call the attention of the Committee to the fact that these Resolutions were becoming very common and resulted in great inconvenience to Members, who in consequence of there being nothing upon the Paper had to go to the Clerk at the Table to ascertain what it was they had to discuss. He had also to call attention to the fact that the Committee was again being asked to vote an indefinite sum of money for the payment of the salaries of the registrars of the Court and the staff and the expenses of the shorthand notes, and he wished to know whether some estimate could not be given of the amount it was proposed to take under the Resolution. The registrar no doubt would be an official with arduous duties to perform, but it was not impossible to divine what his salary would be. There were many registrars at the present time who performed duties analogous to those which would be performed by the new registrar under this Bill. All their salaries were known, and therefore it was perfectly easy to divine what his salary would be. Then he presumed he would not require a large permanent staff, and that it would be easy to ascertain what amount of money would be expended for that purpose. He came, therefore, to the only difficult part, that of divining what the expenditure would be upon the shorthand notes. But the shorthand notes need not be a great expense, because the amount naturally depended upon the number of appeals, and the Attorney-General had stated on a previous occasion that he did not think there would be a great number. Therefore he thought the impossibility of arriving at the probable expenditure for shorthand notes need not prevent the hon. and learned Gentleman from estimating the amount required under the Resolution, because even if the expenditure on the shorthand notes was very great it might be dealt with by means of a Supplementary Estimate. He did not wish to move an Amendment until the hon. and learned Attorney-General had had an opportunity of saying what the sum was that he proposed to take. He would therefore wait until the hon. and learned Gentleman had spoken, and if the answer was not satisfactory he would reserve to himself the right to move his Amendment.

SIR JOHN WALTON said that owing to the alteration of the rules it was almost impossible to put a Resolution of this sort on the Paper. But there were indications in the Bill which gave any hon. Member who desired to oppose the Resolution the information they desired. The hon. Baronet wished to know whether the Government was in a position to place before the Committee an estimate of the cost, first, of the registrar and his staff, and, secondly, in connection with the taking of the shorthand notes at an ordinary criminal trial. The difficulty of arriving at any figure arose from the fact that it was impossible to foresee the number of criminal appeals which would come on for hearing. The expenditure would vary with the number of appeals. As to the registrar's salary, it was provided that the first registrar should be the senior Master of the Crown Office, who was already in receipt of a substantial salary, and it did not follow that there would be any increase in that salary, though it was intended to increase the official staff, which would be adapted to the new demand. As to the expense of shorthand notes, it would be necessary to attach to every assize and quarter sessions an official shorthand writer; but the expense of having a note taken of every case that was tried would not be very great. Then there were the arrangements with reference to shorthand notes, and the charge would probably be about a guinea a case for taking the notes, but it was impossible to say what would be the cost until they saw how many appeals there were likely to be; and then there was the transcript, the cost of which, of course, they could not state, as they had no knowledge of the number of cases which would require to be the subject of a shorthand note. The matter must therefore remain in abeyance until they had some experience and some indication of the number of cases.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS (Kent, St. Augustine's) thought the Committee ought not to be asked to pass the Resolution without their being in possession of a little more information as to the probable amount required, and also as to the terms of the Resolution. It was impossible for Members to move Amendments to a Resolution of this sort even if they desired to do so. The notice which appeared on the Paper was a very bald one. It was impossible for any hon. Member to make any alteration or addition to it. He must express his regret that the hon. and learned Gentleman had not been able to give them more information as to what the probable estimate might be. He had presented to them a bank cheque, which he asked them to sign without the least indication of what the cost was going to be. He agreed that it was impossible for the hon. and learned Gentleman to make an exact estimate when he did not know the number of appeals that were going to be raised under the Bill. The hon. and learned Gentleman was somewhat optimistic when he said that there would be very few appeals. On the Second Reading he had ventured rather to differ from him, because at all events at first, he thought, the number of appeals would be great. Yet the House was asked to sign this blank cheque, and to wait until experience had shown what the work under the Bill was going to cost, before they passed any further criticisms. Some allusion had been made by his hon. friend as to what occurred on the Aliens Bill, of which he himself had charge in the last Parliament. He was then in a similar position to that which the hon. and learned Gentleman occupied now. When the Aliens Bill was before the House he had asked that the money Resolution should be passed, but he could not give any details as to the actual cost under the Bill, nor could he give the actual details. The very Members who now sat on the front bench opposite said it was abominable that he should ask them to give him a blank cheque, and they insisted that he should afford them elaborate details of what the expenditure would be. He had pointed out, in language similar o that used by the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, that it was impossible to say what the exact cost would be, as he did not know what expenditure was likely to be necessary, nor the number of aliens who would come into this country, but, notwithstanding that, hon. Members on the front bench opposite pressed him for the information. The hon. Member for Halifax and the present Postmaster-General were among them; and the Secretary to the Treasury was very caustic in his remarks about his asking the House to give him a blank cheque. He was asked further whether he had approached the Treasury in the first instance and given them a detailed account of what he was likely to spend. He did not know whether the Attorney-General had been to the Treasury and given them an estimate of the expenditure likely to be incurred, and whether they had sanctioned his proposal. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton, on the occasion to which he referred, asked him whether the Home Office had submitted to the Treasury an estimate of the probable cost of putting the Aliens Bill into operation, whether the Treasury had not discussed the estimate, and whether communications in black and white had passed between the two offices before assent was given. He had no doubt that the right hon. Gentleman would feel the same anxiety now that he felt upon that occasion. He might approve of the one Bill and disapprove of the other, but at the same time the principle was the same, and they ought to have the details on this occasion. What was sauce for the goose was sauce for the gander, and the hon. and learned Gentleman could not be surprised if some of his hon. friends raised a protest on this Bill similar to that which was raised on the Aliens Bill. He thought, however, that the hon. and learned Gentleman would agree that hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition side of the House had no object in opposing this Bill other than to get the information which they desired. He was one of those who was sitting with the hon. and learned Gentleman on the Grand Committee upstairs, and at the present moment they were waterlogged and could not get on with the Bill until the Money Resolution had been passed. Had it not been for the speech of his hon. friend behind him with regard to the difference of attitude adopted by hon. Members opposite compared with that which they took on the former occasion to which he referred he would not have intervened, but he would not now further delay the progress of the Bill.

Sir F. BANBURY said that in the absence of any explanation he would move to add at the end of the Motion the words, "such expenditure not to exceed £6,000 per annum." He considered that at any rate under this Bill it would be very easy to form some estimate of the cost. The Attorney-General could not form an estimate of the cost of the shorthand notes, but the charge was a guinea a case, and as they knew the number of assizes it would not be difficult to form some idea of the probable cost of that item. The hon. and learned Gentleman had said that there would be extra remuneration and salaries in the Registrar's office, but he had not given an estimate of what was likely to be the cost on the data which he possessed. He moved his Amendment, therefore, because he thought it was in the interest of the country and of the House that they should know what amount they were voting, and that they should not always be giving right hon. Gentlemen opposite blank cheques. He claimed support of his Amendment from hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite because of their action on a precisely similar point in connection with the Aliens Bill.

Amendment proposed—

"At the end, to add the words, 'such expenditure not to exceed £6,000 per annum.'"—(*Sir F. Banbury.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. T. L. CORBETT said he rose heartily to support the Amendment, and he thought that they were indebted once more to his hon. friend for the vigilance he had displayed to ensure economy in the public service. Economy had always been advocated by hon. Gentlemen opposite, but it was now received by them almost with derision, He did not suppose that one Member out of ten who was shouting a little while ago "divide" knew anything about the meaning of the Resolution which had been sprung upon the House. Until it was extracted by his hon. friend not one syllable of information had been vouchsafed to the House about the Resolution. The Attorney-General had refused to give even an approximate estimate of the salaries of the new officials. In the circumstances, therefore, he thought that £6,000 was a most ample endowment of the Registrar and his staff. The Amendment was very moderate, and he only wished that it had been more stringent. How could the House of Commons vote money without any kind of inquiry? Those on his side of the House used to be charged with extravagance, but now they were the only Party who kept an eye on the public purse, and it was the Party opposite, while the Labour Members remained silent, who squandered public money without giving the information for which they were asked. In the circumstances he thought that the Labour Party must really support the Amendment.

Lord R. CECIL thought that the whole of this Committee stage on the Resolution could well be abolished as part of the procedure of the House. The object of the procedure was to give the House some control over the expenditure to be incurred, but in the hands of the present Government it was really useless. The Resolution asked the House to sanction some expenditure, but not the slightest estimate of the amount was given and how they were to form any judgment at all as to what was or was not to be sanctioned passed his comprehension altogether. The salaries of the staff might be to some extent known, though their total amount must depend on the amount of work to be done under the Bill. As to the shorthand writers, it was of course easy to ascertain the number of assizes and of quarter sessions and to estimate the number of fees which would have to be paid to them, but he thought that it would be a very much larger item than was anticipated by the hon. Member for the City of London. The cost of transcribing would depend on the number of appeals brought. The Attorney-General had said that he could not afford any idea at all of what the number of appeals would be. That seemed to him to be a very serious statement to make to the House of Commons, because the whole practicability of the Bill depended on the probable number of appeals that would be brought under it. The Bill said that an appeal should be allowed in every case, but it did not make any addition to the judicial strength to deal with them. If the Bill was to be practicable at all there must be some kind of estimate of the number of appeals. He could not believe but that the Attorney-General or somebody had made some estimate of the amount likely to be spent under the Bill. He did not say that it should be an exact estimate, but they ought to be able to give them some suggestion of the probable amount. If the Government came down to ask the House to vote money without stating the amount or giving any details, then this procedure, which was supposed to give them control, was reduced to a mere farce, and they had far better abolish it altogether. He hoped that, even now, the Home Secretary or the Attorney-General would give some information which would enable the Committee to form some kind of judgment of the amount likely to be necessary. As to the Amendment, he was afraid that he could not support it. He could not agree to limiting the amount unless they had some sort of assurance from the Executive Government that it was an amount which would make the Bill effective.

CAPTAIN CRAIG said that there were other Bills on which a similar question might arise when the money Resolutions were proposed, and the House should certainly require information of a more or less definite nature of the amount needed. In regard to the present Resolution, he could see nothing in the Bill to limit the expenditure which might be incurred under its provisions. His recollection was that Friday after Friday they had been asked to pass similar Resolutions, and he submitted that they were entitled to adequate information before voting the money. If his hon. friend had not moved to limit the amount to £6,000, he had himself intended to fix the sum at £8,000, because he thought that the hon. Baronet had limited the amount unnecessarily. It would be very undesirable if, towards the end of the year perhaps, there were cases in which it was right that there should be appeals and it was found that the £6,000 allowed had been all absorbed, and that the Bill was crippled because there were no further funds. He was perfectly certain that that was not the intention of the hon. Baronet. The House and the country should know what the Bill was going to cost.

SIR JOHN WALTON said he had pointed out that the cost of shorthand writing was only a small item, and that the amount of the salaries and the increase of the Registrar's staff was dependent upon the number of appeals. It was impossible to say at the present what would be the number of appeals, and therefore they could not make any reasonable forecast of the expenditure which would be incurred. The Amendment, by limiting the expenses under the Bill, would have the effect of impairing its operation.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 32; Noes, 199. (Division List No. 253.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood,RtHn.SirAlex.F.
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Ashley, W. W.
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt.Hon.SirH.
Beach, Hn. Michael HughHicks
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bull, Sir William James
Carlile, E. Hildred
Cave, George
Cavendish,Rt.Hon.Victor C.W.
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig,CaptainJames(Down,E.)
Dalrymple, Viscount
Dixon-Hartland,SirFred Dixon
Faber, George Denison (York)
Forster, Henry William
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gretton, John
Hamilton, Marquess of
Helmsley, Viscount
Kimber, Sir Henry
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Meysey-Thompson, E. C.
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Turnour, Viscount
Warde, Col. C. E. (Kent, Mid.)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson,A.Stanley(York, E.R.)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Frederick Banbury and Mr. Rawlinson.

NOES.

Acland, Francis Dyke
Agnew, George William
Alden, Percy
Allen,A.Acland(Christchurch)
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Astbury, John Meir
Atherley-Jones, L.
Baring,Godfrey(Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow,JohnEmmott(Somerset
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Beale, W. P.
Beck, A. Cecil
Bell, Richard
Belloc, Hilaire Joseph Peter R.
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Boland, John
Boulton, A. C. F.
Bowerman, C. W.
Bright, J. A.
Brunner,J.F.L.(Lancs.,Leigh)
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton,Rt.Hn.SydneyCharles
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton,Rt.Hn.RichardKnight
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Cleland, J. W.
Clynes, J. R.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins,SirWm.J.(S.Pancras,W.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett,CH(Sussex,E.Grinst'd.
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cox, Harold
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dickinson,W.H.(St.Pancras,N.
Dobson, Thomas W.
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne,MajorE. Martin (Walsall
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Esslemont, George Birnie
Evans, Samuel T.
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, John Michael F.
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.Herbert John
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Harmsworth,R.L.(Caithn'ss-sh
Hart-Davies, T.
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hedges, A. Paget
Hemmerde, Edward George
Henderson,J.M.(Aberdeen,W.)
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hodge, John
Hogan, Michael
Horniman, Emslie John
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hyde, Clarendon
Jackson, R. S.
Jacoby, Sir James Alfred
Jones,SirD.Brynmor(Swansea)
Jones,William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Laidlaw, Robert
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Lardner, James Carrige Rushe
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lea,HughCecil(St.Pancras,E.)
Leese,SirJosephF. (Accrington)
Lever,A. Levy(Essex,Harwich)
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lockwood,Rt.Hn.Lt.-Col.A.R.
Lundon, W.
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacVeigh,Charles(Donegal,E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Killop, W.
Maddison, Frederick
Marnham, F. J.
Meagher, Michael
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alport
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd(Carmarthen)
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Nicholson,CharlesN.(Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nugent, Sir Walter Richard
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien,Kendal(Tipperary,Mid
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Pearson,W.H.M.(Suffolk,Eye)
Philipps,Col.Ivor(S'thampton)
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh,Central)
Priestley,W.E.B.(Bradford ,E.)
Radford, G. H.
Redmond, JohnE.(Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mpn'
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)

Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, Sir C. E. (Manchester)
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sherwell, Arthur James
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Sir Albert
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sutherland, J. E.
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Toulmin, George
Vivian, Henry
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walton, Sir John L. (Leeds, S.)
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, Henry A.
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, Llewelyn (Carmarth'n
Williamson, A.
Wilson, Hon. C. H. W. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Winfrey, R.
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. Herbert Lewis.

Main Question again proposed.

And, it being after Five of the clock, and objection being taken to Further Proceeding, the Chairman proceeded to interrupt the Business.

Whereupon Mr. ATTORNEY-GENERAL rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

SIR F. BANBURY said he had objected, it being after the time for opposed business before the hon. and learned Gentleman had moved.

*THE CHAIRMAN said the hon. Baronet had objected. On the objection being made he (the Chairman) rose to interrupt the business. On his rising the Attorney-General moved the closure, which was quite in order.

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 193; Noes, 29. (Division List No. 254.)

AYES.

Acland, Francis Dyke
Agnew, George William
Alden, Percy
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Ambrose, Robert
Astbury, John Meir
Atherley-Jones, L.
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, John Emmott (Somers't
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Beale, W. P.
Beck, A. Cecil
Bell, Richard
Belloc, Hiliare Joseph Peter R.
Bennett, E. N.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Alfred
Boland, John
Boulton, A. C. F.
Bowerman, C. W.
Bright, J. A.
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Chas.
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt. Hn. Richard Knight
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Cleland, J. W.
Clynes, J. R.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras, W.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, CH (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cox, Harold
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dickinson, W. H. (St. Pancras, N.
Dobson, Thomas W.
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Evans, Samuel T.
Everett, R. Lacey
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Fuller, John Michael F.
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Harmsworth, R. L. (Caithn'ss-h
Hart-Davies, T.
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hedges, A. Paget
Hemmerde, Edward George
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hodge, John
Hogan, Michael
Horniman, Emslie John
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Jackson, R. S.
Jacoby, Sir James Alfred
Jones, Sir D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewick, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Laidlaw, Robert
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Lardner, James Carrige Rushe
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lea, Hugh Cecil (St. Pancras, E.)
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich)
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lundon, W.
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes

Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Killop, W.
Maddison, Frederick
Meagher, Michael
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alport
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Nicholson, Charles N. (Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nugent, Sir Walter Richard
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary, Mid
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Pearson, W.H.M. (Suffolk, Eye)
Philipps, Col. Ivor (S'thampton)
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Priestley, W.E.B. (Bradford, E.)
Radford, G. H.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mp'n
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, Sir C.E. (Manchester)
Seaverns, J. H.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Rt. Hn. T. (Hawick B.)
Sherwell, Arthur James
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Sir Albert
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sutherland, J. E.
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Toulmin, George
Vivian, Henry
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walton, Sir John L. (Leeds, S.)
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, Henry A.
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, Llewelyn (C'rmarth'n
Williamson, A.
Wilson, Hn. C.H.W. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Winfrey, R.
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. Herbert Lewis.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Rt. Hn. Sir Alex A.
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Ashley, W. W.
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hon. Sir H.
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Bull, Sir William James
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt. Hn. Victor C. W.
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craik, Sir Henry
Dalrymple, Viscount
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Faber, George Denison (York)
Forster, Henry William
Gretton, John
Hamilton, Marquess of
Helmsley, Viscount
Kimber, Sir Henry
Lockwood, Rt. Hn. Lt.-Col. A. R.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Meysey-Thompson, E. C.
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Turnour, Viscount
Warde, Col. C. E. (Kent, Mid.)
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wolff, Gustav, Wilhelm
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Frederick Banbury and Mr. Rawlinson.

Main Question put accordingly, and agreed to.

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the payment out of moneys provided by Parliament of the salaries of the Registrar of the Court of Criminal Appeal and his staff appointed under any Act of the present session to establish a Court of Criminal Appeal and to amend the Law relating to Appeals in Criminal Cases, and of the expense of taking shorthand notes and of making transcripts in pursuance of such Act.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next.

INJURED ANIMALS ACT (1894) AMENDMENT BILL.

As amended (by the Standing Committee), considered; read the third time, and passed.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES.)

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Members from Standing Committee C: Mr. Shackleton and Mr. John Taylor (in respect of the Small Holdings and Allotments Bill), Mr. George Roberts (added in respect of the Small Holdings and Allotments Bill); and had appointed in substitution (in respect of the Small Holdings and Allotments Bill): Mr. Hodge, Mr. Gill, and Mr. Jowett.

Report to lie upon the Table.

Whereupon Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to Standing Order No. 3.

Adjourned at eighteen minutes after Five o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 1st July, 1907.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with:—North Staffordshire Railway.

The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

Kingston-upon-Hull Corporation Bill. A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee.

Great Central Railway Bill. The King's consent signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill. The King's consent signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Annfield Plain and District Gas Bill. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Dundee Corporation Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.]. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn.

Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway (Additional Capital, etc.) Bill. Moved, That the order made on the 20th day of March last, "That no Private Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after the 18th day of June next," be dispensed with, and that the Bill be now read 2ª; agreed to: Bill read 2ª accordingly, and committed.

Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway (General Powers) Bill; Barry Railway Bill. Moved, That the order made on the 20th day of March last, "That no Private Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after the 18th day of June next," be dispensed with, and that the Bills be now read 2ª; agreed to: Bills read 2ª accordingly, and committed: The committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Broadstairs and St. Peter's Urban District Water Bill [H.L.]; Alton Military Hospital Bill [H.L.]. Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Canal Tolls and Charges (New Junction Canal) Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to.

Kingston-upon-Hull Corporation Bill. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Inchiquin be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bill in the place of the Lord Hamilton of Dalzell; read, and agreed to.

Hull and Barnsley Railway Bill. Read 3ª, with the Amendments; and passed, and returned to the Commons.

North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill. Brought from the Commons read 1ª, and referred to the Examiners.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11) Bill (No. 87); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 14) Bill (No. 88).—Read 1a; to be printed, and referred to the Examiners.

Ladybank Sewerage, Drainage, and Water Provisional Order Bill. Read 1ª; to be printed; and (pursuant to the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899) deemed to have been read 2ª (The Lord Hamilton of Dalzell) and reported from the Committee. (No. 89.)

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London, No. 1) Bill [H.L.]; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]. Read 3ª (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Land Drainage Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill; Land Drainage Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill. Read 3ª (according to order), with the Amendments; and passed, and returned to the Commons.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Regulations for secondary schools (in force from 1st August, 1907).

Code of Regulations for public elementary schools in England, exclusive of Wales and Monmouthshire, with Schedules, 1907.

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3844. China (Shanghai).

No. 3845. Germany (Baden).

EXPLOSIVES ACT, 1875.

Thirty-first Annual Report of His Majesty's Inspectors of Explosives, being their Annual Report for the year 1906.

LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITIES (ENGLAND AND WALES).

Statements showing, as regards England and Wales—

The total number of members of boards of guardians, urban district councils (other than town councils), and rural district councils, and the number who are women; and

The total number of members of the education committees established by local education authorities, and the number who are women.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION.

Return of advances made under the Irish Land Act, 1903, during the period from 1st November, 1903, to the 31st December, 1905. Vol. I., Part II.

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC ACT, 1888.

Report to the Board of Trade of an inspection of the Cromford Canal under Section 41 of the Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

WOODS, FORESTS, AND LAND REVENUES.

Eighty-fifth Report of the Commissioners of His Majesty's Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues, dated 27th June, 1907.

PUBLIC WORKS LOAN BOARD.

Thirty-second Annual Report of the Public Works Loan Board, 1906–1907 (with appendices).

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

ADVERTISEMENTS REGULATION BILL.

Order for the Second Reading on Tuesday the 9th instant, discharged.

BRITISH NORTH AMERICA BILL.

Read 1^a; to be printed; and to be read 2^a To-morrow. (No. 85.)

INJURED ANIMALS ACT (1894) AMENDMENT BILL.

Read 1^a, and to be printed. (No. 86).

IRISH LAND PURCHASE.

*LORD CLONBROCK rose to call attention to the increasing delay, uncertainty, and loss entailed upon landlords and tenants by the present methods of administering the purchase provisions of the Irish Land Act of 1903, and to ask His Majesty's Government what steps they proposed taking to secure a more effective working of the Act.

The noble Lord said: My Lords, in rising to put the Question which stands in my name I am somewhat emboldened by the hope that the object of this Question at least may commend itself to the sympathies of His Majesty's Government, for I am convinced that they are as anxious as I or any noble Lord on this side of the House can be that the Purchase Act of 1903 should work smoothly and rapidly. This Act has been most successful in one respect, namely, in the number of people who have shown themselves anxious to avail themselves of its provisions. Applications representing an amount of nearly £51,000,000 have been received, but of these only applications to the amount of £18,000,000 have been disposed of since the Act has been in operation—that is, just over three and a half years. Now, if it has taken over three and a half years to dispose of £18,000,000, it is quite clear that it will take seven years at least to dispose of the remaining £33,000,000. This is a most serious outlook for all parties concerned.

The vendor of the property only receives interest on the purchase money at a less amount than his present rent, but he has to continue in the interim, between the time when his application is received and the money paid over, to meet the full interest on all mortgages, family charges, and so forth, and also on all temporary charges, such as, for instance, the tithe rent charge. In the case of people who have commuted at least one-half of the tithe rent charge is at present paid off, and therefore when the vendor receives the purchase money for the estate he can dispose of it on very easy terms, whereas in this interval he has to pay the full amount of interest and sinking fund calculated on the original capital. The same thing occurs in the case of what are known as Board of Works loans.

The tenants also suffer from the delay, for the interest that they have to pay on the purchase money, though less than their former rent, is higher than the annual instalments they would have to pay for their purchase. Solicitors and agents also suffer, for solicitors do not receive their fees until the matter is closed, and agents no not obtain compensation for the loss of their services until that time. This is so serious a matter to all persons concerned, that I would urge His Majesty's Government to do all in their power to expedite the working of the Act. Mr. Finucane, in his evidence the other day before the Royal Commission on Congestion, said—

> "If you were to raise £30,000,000 to-morrow we could pay it all away in two or three years. It is a mere matter of increasing our staff for inspection."

He was then asked—

> "Then I may take it for granted that the block is due to the fact that the money is not there?"

and Mr. Finucane replied—

> "To absolutely nothing else but to the want of money and staff."

He added—

> "The three Estates Commissioners, as they stand, given sufficient staff and office accommodation, which hitherto we have not had, could, without the slightest trouble and without over working, get through £10,000,000 or, possibly, even £15,000,000 a year, I think."

This, therefore, my Lords, is a mere question of money and staff, and I hope His Majesty's Government will give their most earnest consideration to it. Of course, it would be very unfair to blame the Estates Commissioners for the block that has taken place on this account. There is an old Irish saying that, "Samson was a strong man and Solomon was a wise man, but neither of them could pay money when they hadn't got it," and that is the position the Estates Commissioners are in. As to the insufficiency of the staff, there ought to be no difficulty in procuring suitable candidates for these appointments, as there are a considerable number of land clerks now thrown out of employment by the sale of estates who would be thoroughly competent to discharge the duties under the Estates Commissioners.

But while this want of money and want of staff may explain the reason for the block in the sense of the large sum represented by the amount of the applications to be disposed of, it does not explain why the proceedings under the Act should take longer than they did at the outset, which undoubtedly is the case. After the Act came into operation large properties were disposed of in seven or eight months, but now properties which do not offer any further complication than those take about two years at the least. This apparently can only proceed from some changes in procedure or defects in organisation. The same complaint exactly was made by the Commission presided over by Sir Edward Fry in respect to purchase under the former Acts. The Commissioners then pointed out that although every succeeding Act had endeavoured to remove technicalities and small points of complexity, yet the working was slower than it had been at the beginning. The Act of 1903 was specially directed to removing unnecessary complications, and yet we find that the proceedings take very much longer than they did in the early stages of the working of the Act.

It certainly is the opinion of men who are most competent to judge, and who have had considerable dealings with the

Estates Commissioners, that grave defects in organisation exist. It is complained that the correspondence is very irregularly conducted, and that important documents, such as maps and so on, are sent to the office of the Commissioners and are then apparently pigeon-holed and forgotten, for it takes a considerable time before they can be found when wanted. Again, to show the delays that take place for want of organisation, there is the case of a noble Lord, a Member of this House, who informed me that an inspector was sent down to go over his estate. This went on for some time, and there was very little more to be done. A couple of additional days would have settled the whole business, when it was suddenly discovered that the inspector was over age. He was then recalled. One would have thought that they need not have been so extraordinarily particular, and that a couple of days more would not have made much difference. But this case was hung up until the inspector came back some months afterwards, the Commissioners having apparently decided in the meantime that he was not too old for his work. In another case the tenants' agreements were all completed in the year 1905 and lodged, and the estate provisionally declared an estate by the Estates Commissioners; but since then nothing has been done. The landlord has written frequently to ask when he may expect further progress, and the reply has always been that it will be concluded shortly, but for two years the case has been hung up altogether.

It would look as if the Commissioners do not approve of direct sale to the tenants, and wish to have the sales made to themselves in order that they may break up the lands and divide them as they please, taking in evicted tenants, or migrants from the congested districts, or something of that kind. Both of the cases I have mentioned are from the province of Leinster. It might be imagined that a poor Connaught man like myself might not complain of landlords in the west being given priority over Leinster men, but I like to see fair dealing all round, even in the case of Leinster landlords. There is another case where delay has been interposed by the irregular and, I should think, illegal action of an inspector. I have in my hand a letter from a large firm of land agents in Dublin, who state that they have been in communication for some time for the sales of some property in Galway to the occupying tenants. The property contains some grass land, and in order to meet the wishes of the tenants this firm arranged that the sale should be made to the Estates Commissioners. But prior to this they agreed upon the terms at which the occupying tenants were to buy their holdings. The property was inspected on three days lately by the Estates inspector. He ascertained from each tenant the amount of his yearly rent and his valuation, and then inquired from each individual whether he was satisfied to purchase on the terms he had agreed to, or whether he would leave to the Estates Commissioners the settlement of the amount to be paid. Of course, the tenants agreed to leave the settlement to the Estates Commissioners, for they knew that they could not be made to pay a greater sum than that which the landlord had arranged with them to accept, but there was a chance that the Estates Commissioners would name a lower sum. The writers of the letter submit that this action on the part of an official is most unjust to the interests of the landlord. But apart from this such action must lead to uncertainty and delay. There is no proof that this inspector acted in accordance with the views of the Estates Commissioners; if he did not, it only shows how loose is their system of organisation. It is the opinion of people most competent to judge that great disorganisation exists, and the one way of remedying it would be by the appointment of a chief of the staff to regulate the employees, because the secretaries and the other high officials are evidently so hard worked that they are not able properly to supervise and arrange the matters with which the inspectors have to deal.

But apart from this want of organisation, changes in procedure have been recently introduced, and very considerable changes too. They are set forth in the last Report of the Estates Commissioners—a rather remarkable document, for if it is read it will be observed that

Lord Clonbrock.

Mr. Wrench, one of the three Commissioners, and the one who has certainly had the most experience, disagrees on five separate points with the instructions drawn up by his colleagues, pointing out that in some cases they are unnecessary and injurious and in others illegal. Now, I will take one especially, which certainly will be a great source of delay. In all non-zonal cases—that is to say, in all cases that do not come under Section 1 of the Act of 1903—the valuer sent down by the Estates Commissioners is directed to estimate what the fair rent of the farm may be, and he has to make this estimate and to allow or disallow improvements on mere hearsay. Mr. Wrench objects to this strongly, pointing out that the Estates Commissioners have neither the machinery nor the jurisdiction for fixing a fair rent.

We have often objected to what we considered the arbitrary way, the uncertain way, in which rents were fixed by the Assistant Commissioners; but anyhow they were then fixed on sworn evidence, and there was an appeal from them to the Land Commission, who again heard the matter on sworn evidence. In this case it is merely to be done from the opinion held by the valuer on hearsay evidence. Not only that, but the rent when fixed by the Assistant Commissioners was fixed for fifteen years, and there was a chance—a remote chance, I admit, but it was a chance—that some future Land Commission might take a more reasonable view of the farm; but now it is fixed for ever, and it is on this one single man's verdict, formed only on hearsay evidence, that the amount which the landlord receives is to be assessed.

Moreover, in the instructions given to the valuer the Estates Commissioners seem to have, to a certain extent, reverted to what was condemned by the Commission presided over by Sir Edward Fry as one of the worst features for valuation. It was so strongly objected to by the Commission that it led to an alteration in the instructions given to valuers. I mean that they seem to direct the valuer to rest his estimate solely on what the Fry Commission called technical as against popular evidence. Technical evidence, of course, is what a man from his knowledge of agriculture and the nature of the soil believes to be the gross produce of the land, coupled with the cost of production. Popular, or what I should prefer to call local, evidence would be the conditions of the neighbourhood, the amounts that are paid for tenant right for similar land, the rent which has been paid without difficulty for a number of years both on that and on adjoining land, and the state of prosperity or poverty of those who have been paying it.

I had once an illustration of the difference between these two methods of valuing. On one occasion a sub-Commission came down to the county of Galway, and as I live on the extreme end of the county some cases on my property were among the first batch that came to be dealt with. They did not do much harm. They confirmed the existing rents in several cases and reduced the others very slightly; therefore I thought I had nothing to complain of. But about a fortnight or three weeks afterwards my agent came across the sub-Commission, who had gone further west, and asked one of them how they were getting on. The Commissioner replied—

> "At the rate we are going now we ought to have raised Lord Clonbrock's rents."

Apparently they had gained experience as they went on as to the conditions and circumstances of the county, and I was a sufferer through my geographical position. I never was before sensible of any inconvenience from living so much nearer Hyde Park Corner than my neighbours in the county, but in this case I lost by it. There you have the difference between the technical and the popular evidence.

There is a further objection to the instructions given to the valuers—that although the Commissioners do draw a distinction between the price paid for the land and security for the land, they nevertheless seem to take the rent in a certain way as a measure of the security. The rent is a measure of the landlord's interest, and therefore may perfectly be taken as a basis of what the purchase annuity ought to be, but that only represents the landlord's interest in the farm. There is, in addition, the tenant's interest, which is exceedingly valuable and which is often sold for five, ten, and up to fifteen years purchase, and in small holdings up to twenty years purchase. That shows what a large interest there is in the farm in addition to the landlord's, and therefore it is perfectly illusory to take the rent as a measure of the security which the Government wish to have. I quite concur that in dealing with public money the greatest care ought to be taken that money is only advanced on adequate security, but at the same time this appears to introduce an apparently needless complication and will have the effect of delaying any matters that are pending.

There is a further point. The Estates Commissioners have taken to limiting the amount advanced for any single farm to the sum of £3,000. Before the Act of 1903 the limit laid down by Parliament was £5,000. By the Act of 1903 it was raised to £7,000, with a view to expediting sales. But now they have refused to advance more than £3,000. That, again, can only be taken as an indication that the Estates Commissioners are anxious to discourage the purchase of large farms by the sitting tenant, and to insist that he should be satisfied with a slice of it, and that the rest should be bought by them for splitting up for evicted tenants and others. This must lead to friction and delay, and possibly to the stopping altogether of negotiations. There is another cause of anxiety which, however, I will not go into now because it is the subject of legal proceedings in Ireland—I mean their habit of postponing, till so late a period, the declaration that an estate is a separate estate for the purpose of purchase. There is also the delay in giving an absolute undertaking whether they will purchase or not, until they ascertain that they will be able to dispose of the land profitably. They make a sort of provisional bargain, which is not the usual way in which people deal when they are buying and selling, and they sometimes find they cannot dispose of the land, and then throw it back on the vendor's hands.

This occurred in regard to the estate of the O'Conor Don. In the time of the late O'Conor Don the Commissioners refused to consider the estate on which he lived, and which he had purchased, as a separate estate, unless he threw in with it another estate, which he had inherited, ten miles off. They insisted that the two together could only form a separate estate, the reason being that there was a quantity of untenanted grass land on the further property of which they wished to get possession. After a considerable delay it was agreed to, and now the present O'Conor Don, giving evidence before the Commission on Congestion, stated that they had thrown a large portion of this grass land back on his hands because they did not know what to do with it. This, he pointed out, shows that in that part of the country, at least, the supply of untenanted land exceeded the demand, and that there was no necessity for compulsory purchase.

Anxiety and uncertainty prevail very strongly in Ireland, and this has been aggravated by another matter not immediately connected with the subject on hand, the very remarkable and unaccountable reductions of rent that have lately taken place, and also by the new method of appointing Assistant Commissioners, who are appointed only for a year, and without any examination to prove that they are qualified for the post. The anxiety has been so great that we have been urged to follow the line indicated by the Notice which has been placed on the Paper by my noble friend Lord Dunraven, and press for an inquiry into the working of the Act. We, however, thought it best to bring the matter in this shape before His Majesty's Government, reserving to ourselves to consider afterwards whether we shall follow up that plan by moving for a Select Committee to inquire into the whole subject. I beg to ask the Question standing in my name.

*THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN: My Lords, I at once wish to relieve the House of any anxiety as to whether I propose to make two speeches in the present week on this subject. I have placed a Notice on the Paper for next Thursday—

> "To call attention to the working of the Irish Land Act, 1903, and to move that in the opinion of this House an inquiry into the subject is desirable,"

but I do not intend to proceed with it, and whatever remarks I should have made then I will endeavour to make now. At the same time I reserve to myself the liberty to reintroduce the Notice at a later date if I should think it necessary to do so.

I need not go largely or in detail into the financial question which my noble friend Lord Clonbrock has already put so clearly before your Lordships. Agreements have been made between landlords and tenants, and applications arising out of them for advances have been made to the extent of in round figures, £51,000,000. advances to the extent of £16,000,000 have been made, and I think there is £1,500,000 in the hands of the Estates Commissioners. That, my Lords, is shortly the story of three and a half years working of the Act, and the fact that the Estates Commissioners are in arrear to the extent of roughly £34,000,000 surely discloses a very serious condition of affairs, and one that will become infinitely more serious, because, unless the operations of the Act are cut short in some way or sufficient money is found to finance the Act, it is obvious that these arrears will go on accumulating, and that in the course of time a condition of affairs will arise which, on account of the unrest and confusion and friction that it causes, will become perfectly intolerable.

These £34,000,000 odd of arrears cannot at the present rate at which the Act is being financed be worked off under six or seven years. Will your Lordships consider for a moment what that means? It means that for an indefinite period some hundreds of landlords and many thousands of tenants will be absolutely unable to carry out their contracts owing to the inability or unwillingness of the State to fulfil its part of the obligation. What happens is this. The tenant ceases to be a tenant in the sense of paying rent, and in lieu of rent he undertakes to pay interest on the agreed purchase money at the rate of 3½ per cent. The landlord ceases to be a landlord in the way of receiving rent, and neither tenant nor landlord knows what he is, or who he is, or where he is, or what is going to become of him in the future. The inconvenience to the landlord is necessarily very great, but the inconvenience to the tenant is, to my mind, greater still.

The great object of the tenant in purchasing is to become the fee simple owner of his land. The Act provides that he should be able to become so by borrowing a sum of money from the Estates Commissioners and repaying it by terminable annuities at 3¼ per cent., every annual payment, of course, bringing him one year nearer to the expiration of the term for liquidating his loan. As it is now, instead of 3¼ per cent. he pays 3½ per cent. and these annual payments do not bring him one step nearer to the period when the loan will be liquidated. Those disadvantages are apparent, but I think there are other disadvantages to the tenant which are not quite so plain on the face of them. Irish estates, like estates in other parts of the United Kingdom, are mortgaged, and have many encumbrances upon them; and owing to the very heavy fall in rents in Ireland estates that were not unduly mortgaged at one time have become very heavily mortgaged indeed, and the interest on mortgage debt runs as high as 5 and 6 per cent. What happens if the landlord wants to sell? If he can get cash down he can invest a portion of the money at 5 or 6 per cent. interest in paying off mortgage debt. As it is now, he can only get 3½ per cent, and has to continue paying 5 and 6 per cent. on his mortgage debt for an indefinite period. Therefore, a landlord is compelled to ask more for land than he would be glad to take if paid cash down. The lack of money to finance the Act is creating infinite confusion, great difficulties in the way of landlords, and much greater detriment to the tenant, for I am perfectly certain that the fact that there is not sufficient money promptly to pay cash down for estates must have had the effect of raising prices against the tenant.

There has been a great deal said of late that the prices ruling are too high and that the landlords are getting too much for their land. I should be very sorry to express any opinion upon that subject without very adequate *data* and there are no adequate *data*. As far as I can gather from the Estates Commissioners' Reports, the average reduction is 26·2 per cent. That is on all rents. But the Estates Commissioners do not discriminate between first term, second term, and non-judicial rents, so that it is absolutely impossible to tell whether the average reductions have been such as were contemplated by the Land Conference. The conference terms were fair and I abide by them; but two matters must be considered. The Act practically adopted conference terms as regards the landlord, it did not so fully carry out the conference recommendation in respect of the tenant. The Act does not provide for decadal reductions; and, owing to the fall in values, trustees can now invest more advantageously than was contemplated at the time of the Land Conference. The terms were fair and were generally accepted by the landlords of Ireland as reasonable terms. What they accepted was an average of 20 per cent. reduction on second term rents, or their equivalent. Landlords in Ireland accepted those terms as fair, and would, I am confident, have honestly abided by them if the Act had had fair play from the beginning. But that has not been the case.

A most ill-advised effort was made to persuade tenants that they ought to be guided by the number of years purchase at which land changed hands under the Ashbourne Acts—a most absurd idea. Bankrupt estates, absentee estates, and so on had all been sold out under the Ashbourne Acts, and the only object of the Land Conference and of the Land Act was to enable tenants to pay landlords better prices than had been paid under the Ashbourne Acts. Unfortunately tenants, to a large extent, were misled by this bad advice. You cannot have the thing two ways. You cannot have conciliation and fair and honest dealing on one side, and the spirit of making the hardest possible bargain on the other; and tenants, I am sure, have suffered as the result. But be that as it may, the one thing I wish to impress on His Majesty's Government is that I am perfectly certain that the lack of money to finance the Act has had the effect of putting the price up against the tenants. Of course, the shortage of money has arisen from the difficulty of raising money for the purpose of the Act, and, as your Lordships know, the loans have been floated at a discount as high as 13 per cent.—ranging, I think, from 8 to 13 per cent.

I protest against the losses on flotation falling on Ireland. Ireland is not responsible for the fact that British credit has declined, that a mistake was made in converting Consols to 2½ per cent., that there is a great demand for money, or for faulty methods of finance, and I cannot see on what principle in justice these losses should fall on Ireland. There was not a word said about it during the passage of the Land Act through Parliament. And the thing is absurd. The county councils could not support the burden. In the first place, as your Lordships know very well, the county councils are limited by the Act of 1898 in the amount of rate that they can levy, and what would happen would be this. You would have the Local Government Board, acting as the agent of the Treasury, as it said it was the other day, compelling a county council to raise an illegal rate, and then, acting for itself, surcharging the members of the county council for having raised an illegal rate. Surely that is absurd. If the finance of the country does not recover, the total loss on the whole operation of the transfer of land in Ireland will amount to something like £15,000,000. This would place a burden of £500,000 a year on the Irish county councils, which is just one-third of the total rates that are raised all over rural Ireland; and I would ask your Lordships to consider whether it is not manifestly absurd to suppose that Ireland could support a burden of that kind.

It is not for me to suggest what ought to be done in the matter. That is for His Majesty's Government. But I believe the only way, the only possible way, in which the matter can be dealt with is that the loss should be charged against the State. The sum of £500,000 a year is not a very pleasant addition to place upon the Estimates; but, at the same time, whereas £500,000 a year is, as I have said, one-third of the total rates raised in rural Ireland, it is only one-three-hundredth of the expenditure of the United Kingdom. Failing that, and if money cannot be found to finance the Act, I would say that, in my opinion, it would be better to limit the operation of the Act. Raise money at any cost to pay off the obligations that now exist, and limit the operations of the Act in the future. Acknowledge failure on the part of the State, admit that we cannot carry out our obligations, and limit the Act. Any thing would be better than indirectly limiting the Act, as now, by causing every conceivable sort of unnecessary delay, and clogging the wheels of the machine.

I believe want of money to finance the Act is the real cause of much, if not all, the difficulty that has arisen in respect to the reinstatement of evicted tenants, and what is commonly called the uneconomic question of the West. Undoubtedly the Act has not fulfilled expectations in these respects. If you look at the debates which took place when the Act was passing through the House of Commons you will agree that the hopes of the people in Ireland were raised to a very high pitch as to what the Act was to do in ameliorating the conditions of the uneconomic West and in the restoration of evicted tenants. The Act to a great extent has failed in those respects, and undoubtedly has been the cause of great disappointment. I shall not say anything on the question of the congested portions of the country, because there is a Royal Commission inquiring into that subject; and I have nothing to say now on the evicted tenants question because a Bill has been introduced in another place dealing with it, except this—that I hope it will be settled, and settled quickly. It ought to be settled speedily for three reasons. In the first place, Parliament is practically pledged to settle it; in the second place, while it remains open a cause of disquietude remains which affects all the operations of the Act; and, in the third place, evicted tenants seem to multiply in an extraordinary manner.

When the Act was passing through the House of Commons it was roughly estimated that the whole question could be settled for £200,000, and that there were only some 400 evicted families. Now the claims of evicted tenants have grown to 8,000. There is some danger that every tenant in Ireland will be agitating to be evicted in order that he may be reinstated with a loan on easy terms or a free grant. Therefore, for all these reasons, I want this question to be settled as quickly as possible. I gathered from what was said by the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack the other day that His Majesty's Government intended to do two things—to vindicate the law, and to deal with this question on fair and honest terms; and I entirely agree with that policy. I do not know whether it involves compulsion. As far as I am concerned I do not jib at all at the word compulsion, provided only I am satisfied that compulsion is necessary and that the property is taken on fair and honest terms.

What are we to understand by fair and honest terms? I should understand by that the natural value of the land under perfectly normal conditions. I take it that if you could imagine such a thing as a corner in land, and land raised to fictitious prices those prices would not be fair and honest; I take it, on the other hand, that if by any means whatever the value of land is fictitiously depressed those prices would not be fair and honest. Fair and honest terms mean the natural value of land under perfectly normal conditions, and I have no doubt whatever that that is the meaning which His Majesty's Government attach. I cannot find any evidence that sufficient land cannot be acquired voluntarily on those terms. I may be wrong, but I have seen as yet no evidence whatever to the contrary. The fact is that the Estates Commissioners are unable to offer cash. If you go to a man and say you want his property, offer a fair price, and are ready to pay cash down, he may deal with you. There is much magic in the jingle of a big bag of sovereigns. What you say to him now is that you want his property, but he may whistle for the money for six or seven years, and that is quite another affair. I should like, first of all, to be sure that land cannot be obtained voluntarily. If it cannot, I have nothing to say against compulsion except that I take it for granted the State would pay. If I am to be compelled to sell my property to the State I assume that the State will be in a position to pay me for that property.

There are many minor difficulties connected with the Act of which I might speak, but I do not wish unduly to take up your Lordships' time. Some say that the Estates Commissioners' department is absolutely undermanned; other people tell me that it is terribly overmanned, and that the employees are tumbling over each other and have not got elbow room. I do not know the cause of the fact, but I know the fact that confusion amounts to a state of chaos, and it is impossible to get transactions put through. I know of most important cases dealing with the restoration of evicted tenants which have come to nothing simply because it was impossible, after the landlords and tenants had agreed, to get the transaction put through by the Estates Commissioners. I know the extreme difficulty of obtaining answers to letters or of getting any communications properly attended to.

In the Land Conference Report we stated in one paragraph that the executive machinery should be effective, competent, and speedy. The present machinery is not effective, it is not competent, it is not speedy, and if the Act is to work well steps must be taken to remedy that state of things. Of course, His Majesty's Government may be in possession of ample information on all these points. If so, I only wish they would give that information to Parliament and the country. If His Majesty's Government are not in possession of reliable *data* and sufficient evidence, I would suggest to them that an inquiry into the working and the machinery of the Act would be advisable.

The Act itself, in my opinion, requires Amendment in various ways. Some of its clauses are very nearly inoperative; but in no way does it require amendment more urgently than in defining, within reasonable limits—but still defining to some extent—the duties and the powers of the Estates Commissioners. As it is now, the Estates Commissioners are guided by rules formulated for them, and rules can be formulated which practically amend the Act and even go further and repeal portions of the Act. When the Bill was in the House of Commons a pledge was given that the rules and regulations of the Estates Commissioners would be laid before Parliament as soon as practicable. That pledge was broken, it was not put into the Bill. I do not know why, but it was not; and, as a matter of fact, it was not until after considerable pressure that the first rules and regulations issued to the Estates Commissioners were placed on the Table of both Houses of Parliament. Since then, other rules and regulations have been formulated, and, I believe His Majesty's Government have in contemplation further rules and regulations. I have no doubt that they will be good ones, but I protest against the inordinate amount of power which is thus given to the executive. The executive can practically repeal portions of the Act and amend it in any way they like; and that any executive should have such powers is anomalous, and, to my mind, most unwise. It creates endless confusion in Ireland and any amount of mistrust and distrust. Nobody knows the principles on which the Estates Commissioners will act next year and the year after, and they exercise their powers in a very curious manner.

I daresay your Lordships will remember that the Estates Commissioners, not having any legal functions whatever, took upon themselves to act judicially. There was a case where they objected to the regulations which were framed for them by the Lord-Lieutenant, and Mr. Commissioner Finucane looked into the matter and pronounced, as it was called at the time, judgment that the regulations of the superior authority were illegal and *ultra vires*, and Mr. Commissioner Bailey agreed with the judgment of Mr. Commissioner Finucane. Is it not preposterous that any two men, with no judicial experience and no judicial functions whatever, should take upon themselves to pronounce judgment upon the rules and regulations furnished for their guidance by the King's representative in Ireland?

Take another case in the opposite direction. I remember that in the case of an estate in county Antrim, sold to the Commissioners, one of the tenants desired to have a fair rent fixed. The Commissioners threw every obstacle in his way, and issued an order for sale to compel him to buy. The matter came before the county court, and the Judge decided that the Commissioners had acted illegally and a fair rent was fixed.

It is not right that power should exist in the Estates Commissioners to act judicially and to decide matters in this way. The Act of 1903 is a great Act. It has not broken down, but it is in imminent danger of breaking down, to the satisfaction of those who desire a condition of perpetual unrest, unless the Act and the administration of the Act and the whole agrarian question is approached in the broad spirit of conciliation that animated the Land Conference and in which the Act was conceived. The state of confusion becomes more and more confounding, and yet we are told by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that no more loans are to be issued. The National Debt Commissioners are furnishing a certain amount of money—driblets of money. The National Debt Commissioners will make a good profit out of the transaction, because it is impossible to suppose that a financial condition under which guaranteed land stock is paying 3½ per cent. can continue. I do not object in the least to the National Debt Commissioners, or the Post Office, or any other department making a profit. What I do object to is that Ireland should make the loss. I am not a financial expert, but I wish some noble Lord who is would explain to me why it is that this guaranteed land stock paying 2¾ per cent. is not considered a better security than Consols paying 2½ per cent. The security is the same in so far as both stocks are secured on the whole Consolidated Fund; but Irish land stock is better secured than Consols for, in the possible event of a temporary suspension of interest on Consols, the interest on land stock would be payable out of the annuities. Yet in spite of the fact that the security is superior and that it pays 5s. in the £100 better interest, Irish land stock is at the same price as Consols. I cannot account for it unless the reason is that it is called guaranteed Irish land stock instead of what it really is—2¾ per cent. Consols.

I can assure His Majesty's Government that I have not the slightest desire to say anything that would embarrass them in their Irish policy. On the contrary, I approve of their Irish policy. They brought in a Bill this year which, in my opinion, my countrymen were insane in rejecting. It was a Bill which, as it did not attempt in any way to deal with what is commonly called Home Rule, or with the devolution of any legislative functions whatever, could not possibly have acted prejudicially against the demands of anybody, from the most modest devolutionist like myself to the most ardent Home Ruler; but it was a Bill which, at the same time, did offer to Ireland, in a very large degree, the practical, substantial benefits that she could have derived from the most full fledged measure of Home Rule, in the shape of control over administrative departments and over a considerable sum of money. I regret very much that Ireland refused that measure without waiting to see what could be done in Committee in the other House, and I am quite sure that Ireland will regret it herself some day. But I am thankful to His Majesty's Government for having introduced it.

I make these remarks because I do wish to impress on His Majesty's Government the absolute necessity of acting upon the words that fell from the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack the other day, and dealing with all these questions, whether they be as regards congested districts or evicted tenants, on fair and honest terms, and in the spirit that animated the Land Conference—the spirit of conciliation, the only spirit in which Ireland can ever be regenerated or in which Ireland can do anything practical to regenerate herself. I wish also to impress on His Majesty's Government what I believe to be the absolute fact, that if they will dig down true enough and deep enough they will find that of all the difficulties and troubles that exist in Ireland in connection with agrarian matters, the root cause is the lack of sufficient money properly to finance the Act.

LORD DENMAN: My Lords, the Question which Lord Clonbrock has placed upon the Paper raises a very important subject, and I confess that I envy the expert knowledge and the mastery of detail which both noble Lords who have spoken evinced in regard to it. It is a very important subject, not only on account of the large sums of money with which it deals, but also because it directly affects the welfare of so many persons in Ireland. Naturally we sympathise with the disappointment which has been felt with regard to the working of the Act, but I would like to remind the House that complaints as to delay are no new thing, and that in the first year after the Act came into force these complaints were heard. So far back as July, 1905, a meeting of the Incorporated Law Society of Ireland was held in Dublin to protest against the delay in the administration of the measure.

Probably the principal reason for the disappointment which has been caused is the fact that landlords have lodged applications with the Estates Commissioners at a very much quicker rate than was originally anticipated by the authors of the Act. I understand from the Question which Lord Clonbrock has placed on the Paper and from his speech that in his opinion there is increasing delay, uncertainty, and loss, owing to the present methods of administering the purchase provisions of this measure. I cannot admit that that is the case, and I will endeavour to show your Lordships what some, at all events, of the reasons for the delay complained of are. In order to do so I am obliged to go back to what Mr. Wyndham said when this measure was before Parliament. Mr. Wyndham anticipated at that time that some £5,000,000 a year would be paid by the Treasury for the first three years of the working of the Act, and after that time he hoped that we should be able to go forward at an accelerated rate. I would like to remind the House what exactly the state of things was when Mr. Wyndham used those words. In the first place, he estimated roughly that a sum of about £100,000,000 would be required for operations under the Act—it has since, I believe, been put at a very much higher figure—and he hoped that the operations would be completed within fifteen years. That is to say, if you expend £15,000,000 for the first three years, then you will have to find £85,000,000 in the twelve following years, which comes to something a little over £7,000,000 a year.

But the important fact to remember is that when Mr. Wyndham said this he hoped to be able to issue land stock at 95. As noble Lords are well aware, land stock has lately fallen to 83, and to-day it stands at something over 84. When stock is issued at a price below par, interest at the rate of 3¼ per cent. has to be paid out of the guaranteed fund on the amount by which the price obtained falls short of 100. In other words, if £120 of stock are issued in order to obtain £100 of cash—and that is approximately the figure which has obtained recently—then you have a difference of £20. This difference is called the excess stock, and interest and sinking fund at the rate of 3¼ per cent. have to be paid on it. I must apologise to noble Lords from Ireland for going into these details, but I wish to make my case quite clear to the House. With Consols at 83 or 84 and Government securities suffering from similar depression it is obviously impossible to raise a fresh issue of stock in the open market. The bare fact that such an issue was contemplated would tend still further to depress the price of Consols, or at any rate to retard any possible upward tendency. Therefore the stock is being issued and bought from the National Debt Commissioners at the price of the day. This, of course, still necessitates interest being paid on the excess stock, but obviates the disadvantage of raising a loan in the open market.

LORD ASHBOURNE: At present.

LORD DENMAN: Yes, at present. All issues of land stock have been at a very considerable discount, and the charges on this excess stock now amount to a very high figure indeed. The charge is being met at present out of the Irish Development Grant, and, if necessary, we are empowered by the Act to fall back on other funds mentioned in the measure, such as the Probate Duty Grant and the Agricultural Grant. I will not say anything as to the policy of annexing the whole of the fund which was, I believe, originally intended for educational and other purposes, to the paying off of interest and debt on the excess stock; but as soon as this fund becomes exhausted you will then have to fall back on the other funds I have mentioned. These funds are devoted to the relief of rates in Ireland. Therefore if you withhold any portion of them, you indirectly place a burden on the rates in Ireland.

It is not for me to question the expediency or the wisdom of placing these particular funds in the guaranteed fund of the Land Purchase Act, but I think it will be a matter of some difficulty at all events for any Government to obtain the large sums of money that might be necessary out of the rates in Ireland. This question of finding interest on excess stock presents a very difficult problem. It is one of the greatest hindrances, or it may be before long—the Irish development grant will, I believe, last out at the present rate for two and a half or three years—one of the greatest hindrances to the successful administration of the Act. This is a matter which is receiving the very earnest consideration of His Majesty's Government. I understand that a debate on the question of the Land Act is to take place in the other House this week, and no doubt this particular point will be fully dealt with. Therefore I am not able to give any more information to the House regarding it at present; but we have the advantage in this House of the presence of Lord Ashbourne and Lord Atkinson, who are administrative experts, and I have no doubt the Chief Secretary would be only too glad to consider any suggestions they may have to offer for the solution of this difficult problem.

Lord Dunraven said he thought the position might be met by raising another £500,000 a year from the taxpayers of this country. The taxpayers of this country have already borne a considerable burden for this purpose. Of course it might be possible to persuade them to pay a further £500,000 a year, and, if so, that, no doubt, would greatly facilitate the working of the Act. Lord Clonbrock and Lord Dunraven have both complained of the slow rate at which cash advances are made under the Act, but up to date they amount to a figure nearer £19,000,000 than £18,000,000. During the first three years of the Act they amounted to £15,500,000, so that the rate which Mr. Wyndham foreshadowed was kept pace with. Of the total advances made up to 31st March, 1907, 84 per cent. were in direct sales, and 15·24 in other classes of sales, and since that date the percentages show a very similar proportion. I think these figures meet the criticism of Lord Clonbrock that direct sales are suffering because more attention is paid to other classes of sales. During the year up to the 22nd ult. over £6,000,000 have been advanced for the purposes of this Act. I think the expression "driblets of money" applied to such figures is rather a strong term. And since the present Government came into office over £9,000,000 of advances have been made through the Estates Commissioners. Lord Clonbrock has complained of the understaffing of the Estates Commissioners' office.

LORD CLONBROCK: I said the Commissioner, Mr. Finucane, said that.

LORD DENMAN: I thought the noble Lord implied that if there were more Commissioners the Act would be able to be administered more expeditiously.

LORD CLONBROCK: No.

LORD ASHBOURNE: My noble friend quoted Mr. Finucane's evidence before Lord Dudley's Commission. Perhaps my noble friend might read the quotation again.

LORD CLONBROCK: The evidence given by Mr. Finucane was to this effect, that the block represented by these figures was due to absolutely nothing else but want of money and staff. He added—

> "The three Estates Commissioners, as they stand, given sufficient staff and sufficient office accommodation, which hitherto we have not had, could without the slightest trouble get through £10,000,000, or possibly even £15,000,000, a year."

LORD DENMAN: I would like to give some figures showing the way in which the staff has been increased since the present Government came into office. In December, 1905, there were ten inspectors dealing with direct sales; at present there are fifteen. In 1905 there were ten inspectors dealing with the cases which came under Sections 6 and 7 of the Land Act; at present there are twenty. Perhaps I ought to say that fourteen of these have been employed for one year only. Then, with regard to evicted tenants, we have a special staff of eighteen inspectors to deal with those cases.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: Have those special inspectors anything to do with the Estates Commissioners?

LORD DENMAN: I do not know what the noble Marquess means.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: Are the inspectors who deal with evicted tenants taken from the inspectors appointed to carry out the Act of 1903?

LORD DENMAN: I believe they have been specially appointed, but I am not quite certain. Altogether there is a total of fifty-three inspectors employed to-day, as against twenty employed in December, 1905. No doubt cases of delay—the noble Lord mentioned one with regard to the estates of the O'Conor Don—must inevitably occur, but I shall be only too glad to bring any cases specially mentioned to me before the Chief Secretary in order to have inquiry made.

LORD CLONBROCK: It was not a question of delay in the case of the estate of the O'Conor Don, but of the land being thrown back on his hands after having been purchased by the Commissioners who bought too much and did not know what to do with it.

LORD DENMAN: If the noble Lord desires it I will have inquiry made into that matter. I have endeavoured to show that, owing to the state of the money market and to the difficulty of meeting the interest on the excess stock in the immediate future, it is unlikely that the Government will be able to move forward at any greater speed than they have done in the past—not that the Government are in any way indifferent to the successful working of the Act; they are not. They accept the liabilities and responsibilities which they have inherited from their predecessors, and they have no desire to escape, even when they are able to do so, from the obligations resting upon them. But, for the present, I cannot hold out any hope that any larger amount of advances can be made than have been paid out hitherto.

*LORD ASHBOURNE: My Lords, it is obvious to anyone who listened to the speech of the noble Lord who has just sat down that he was extremely anxious to give all the information that was possible, and to make his statement as clear as he could. The question is one of vast importance and great complexity, and requires careful examination from several points of view. The Government are charged with a great responsibility in the administration of this Act, and it would be idle to suggest that the administration of operations so vast as these would not be open to many criticisms, but I think that the cases selected by Lord Clonbrock show that there are grounds for suggesting that it would be desirable to reconsider and re-examine some parts of that administration.

I think, with Lord Clonbrock, that a great deal of the present delay as contrasted with the early operations of the Act is not adequately explained. One would have expected that at first the machinery of such an Act would have moved slowly and heavily. It was not so. When the Act was first passed it worked with very fair rapidity. In the first year there were no complaints of delay; now there are many complaints. My noble friend Lord Clonbrock thinks—and with some reasonableness, so far as I know—that one of the great causes of the delay is that more power and earnestness appear to be given to the aspects of the administration that are not connected with direct sales; in other words, to making provision for evicted tenants, and for the discovery and purchase of untenanted land. These two matters have been so much present to their minds that the Commissioners are believed to have given undue weight and attention to them, important as they are, as contrasted with the infinitely larger question of direct sales. The figures given by the noble Lord who represents the Irish Government as to the inspectorate are, I think, proof of that fact, for they show that a larger proportion of inspectors are employed in reference to the smaller operations connected with the evicted tenants and the purchase of untenanted lands than are engaged in direct sales, which involve millions of money. This is, in my opinion, a legitimate topic for criticism.

The noble Lord then made an interesting statement as to the financial position. I await with very great interest the debate which will take place in the other House on this immensely important subject. We shall then have a most authoritative statement from those who are bound to have considered this question from every point of view, in the presence of those who are gravely concerned; and it would be unbecoming in me to offer any criticism until we hear what will be said in that debate. The noble Lord who replied on behalf of His Majesty's Government invited me to throw down a solution in advance which might be of assistance to the Chief Secretary. There is one condition under which I might do that—namely, if I were told the weight that would be given to my suggestion. But as the noble Lord is naturally not in a position to make any promise on that head I will await the debate in the House of Commons before dealing with that subject.

My noble friend Lord Clonbrock said sufficient to indicate that there were many matters requiring consideration in the code laid down by the Estates Commissioners for the guidance of the inspectors. That is an important question. The Irish Government have really given the Estates Commissioners a blank cheque in regard to forming rules for the guidance of the inspectors, and the code of regulations which they have laid down has not only not worked satisfactorily, but they have, in certain particulars, gone beyond the Act of Parliament itself.

There are three broad categories of property—property within the zones, property which is not within the zones, but still where the tenancies are subject to judicial rents, and property not subject to zones or judicial rents and which has never been through the Land Court. The inspectors are instructed to make a distinction in ascertaining: (1) what is the security for the public advance; and (2) the price which the intending purchaser should pay. They would appear to make this distinction in the case of all three categories. It is stated in the instructions that in reference to properties within the zones they are not entitled to inquire into the security. That is obvious; but they say nothing about the price. Is it that they leave it open to the inspectors to inquire into the price in the case of a landlord whose property is within the zones? I do not know what their practice is with reference to that.

There is another point with regard to the second category. When they come to land which is not within the zones but which may still be subject to a judicial tenancy, what do they tell their inspectors? What is the meaning of a holding under a judicial tenancy? It is one that has been through the mill of the Land Court, one that has had its rent fixed by the procedure under the Land Code. Is it suggested that an inspector appointed under these instructions is to go down and, in the case of a judicial tenancy, where the rent has been ascertained, it may be on appeal by the Land Court, that he is not only to make an examination but to state in his report what in his opinion is the gross fair rent and the net fair rent? Where is the warrant for that? Is there a syllable in the Act of Parliament to support such a power? The Land Court has done this already; it has sent down its sub-Commissioners, and they have already measured both the gross fair rent and the net fair rent, after hearing evidence on oath. Where is the warrant for directing the inspectors to review the work of the Land Commission, and that apparently without any appeal?

I suppose there are very few of your Lordships who have not heard of the Fry Commission. That was a very powerful Commission, and it was presided over by the great judge who is now one of the representatives of this country at the Hague Conference. His colleagues, too, were eminent men, and one of the matters on which the Fry Commission laid stress was that the inspectors were to be told unambiguously that, when they were measuring the security for a national advance, they were to have regard to the conjoint interest of landlord and tenant. That is a matter of first-class importance, but in the new instructions that have been issued there is not a syllable about the inspectors having regard to that conjoint interest. Inspectors are now directed to have regard to a great many purely speculative considerations, such as the likelihood of agricultural and economic changes, which no man can possibly forecast.

They are also told to take into account the improvements admittedly made by landlord or tenant. In Ireland we have got a habit of being very slow to admit things, and my experience of these cases is that neither side will admit the entire accuracy of the statement on the other side. Such agreements are the rarest circumstance, and, in the case of disputed improvements, there is no machinery for investigation. Enough has been said to show that my noble friend was well justified in bringing forward this question, and that there are many things in the administration of the Act which need carefully watching.

THE EARL OF WICKLOW: My Lords, in rising to make a few remarks on this subject I ask for that consideration which is always accorded by your Lordships to one who addresses you for the first time. I am in the more or less fortunate position of a vendor under the Act of 1903, the sale of whose estate is within measurable distance of being concluded. I may therefore comfort myself with the hope that I have little to fear from the eccentricities of Estates Commissioners or land valuers, or from the disputes and difficulties created by new and elaborate forms of procedure. I have some experience of the delay, inconvenience, and loss which must be endured by a vendor under this Act, and to a lesser extent by a buyer; and I therefore wish to express my very great sympathy with all those, whether landlords or tenants, or solicitors or land agents, who have been embarrassed by the state of things which has been brought under your Lordships' notice by my noble friend Lord Clonbrock. It seems to me that he has fully established that a state of things exists which, if not speedily removed, will certainly interfere very seriously with the main object of the Act of 1903, which was greatly to extend and accelerate the operation of the Land Purchase Acts. It is natural that attempts should be made to show that the present unsatisfactory state of things has been brought about by the action of certain officials, or is due to particular forms of procedure, or to the lack of funds, or to insufficient staff, or to lack of organisation in the staff and work of the various departments and offices. But after all, I venture to think that noble Lords who make these complaints are not at all bound to be able to show to what cause the state of things complained of is due. They have done all that individuals could be expected to do when they have shown that this state of things does really exist, and that it has brought the working of the Act almost to a deadlock. The duty of finding out the causes, and of devising remedies seems to me to rest entirely on His Majesty's Government. I therefore venture to appeal most earnestly to the Government to give their most serious attention to the whole subject, and to leave nothing undone which may be necessary to enable the vast sales of property which have been arranged to be carried out without further delay. In doing this the Government will not only benefit the landlords, tenants, and others who are interested in the speedy carrying out of these sales, but I venture to think they will also confer no small benefit on the whole community.

*THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Earl of CREWE): My Lords, I think it will be evident to everybody who has followed this debate that it deals with two entirely distinct questions—the finance of the Land Act and the method of its administration. It is undoubtedly the case that the Act of 1903 has been in some degree choked by its own success. No one could foresee how large the number of applications would be. As will be clear to anyone who reads the debates that took place in the other House during the progress of the Bill, the then Chief Secretary hoped and anticipated that the development grant of £185,000 a year would be sufficient to meet the loss on the flotation of the various issues of stock. I noted that in introducing the Bill in another place Mr. Wyndham said—

> "Imagine stock issued at 95,"

And an hon. Member called out—

> "At 80."

The world knows nothing of its greatest men, we are told, and that un-named hon. Member showed a gift of prophesy which, if not absolutely accurate, was terribly near the fact. I observe in *The Times* this morning that Consols stood at 84$\frac{5}{8}$ yesterday, and Irish land stock stood at about the same figure. I quite agree with my noble friend Lord Dunraven that it is a very singular thing that this security, which is, as he told us, at least as good as Consols, should, for some of those curious reasons which govern the operations of the money market, not stand at the relatively high point to which the higher rate of interest would seem to entitle it.

As my noble friend stated, it was the anticipation of the Government of that day that money would be called for at the rate of about £5,000,000 a year for the first three years, and afterwards at the rate of £7,000,000 a year for the next twelve years, at the end of which period it was hoped that all the purchasable land in Ireland would have been dealt with. Now, to meet the bargains which have been hitherto made such a sum of money is required as could only be raised at a loss of £5,000,000. The noble Earl, Lord Dunraven, talked very lightly about £500,000 a year. I took occasion to refer the other night in the Army debate to the light-hearted manner in which those who were not responsible talked about sums such as these, but I think everybody, without distinction of Party, must see that it would be a very serious matter indeed—serious for all parties, for the authors of the Land Act and those who are trying to carry out its obligations—for Ireland to come to the predominant partner with a demand of that kind; and I confess that even if the Government were prepared to ask the taxpayers of this country to make a sacrifice of that kind it is not certain that they would be able to induce them to do so. Consequently it cannot be denied that the situation in regard to this matter is one of very great gravity indeed. Certainly it is not one upon which the Government desire to express any kind of recrimination, and equally they hope they may be spared any, as they have been in the course of this debate.

Of course, we on this side may look back and wish that it had been possible when the Land Act of 1903 was passed to pay off the landlords in stock instead of in cash, but the obvious difficulty which confronted Mr. Wyndham at that time in doing that was the question of mortgages. Whether that could have been got over by any bolder policy in dealing with charges than that which any Government has hitherto attempted to adopt I cannot say. It would certainly have been easier for the Government of noble Lords opposite to do it than it would be for us to attempt anything of the kind. So far as regards asking noble Lords opposite to supply us with plans, the noble and learned Lord, Lord Ashbourne, very wisely and properly guarded himself against doing anything of the kind; but still, if any inspiration should happen to occur to the noble and learned Lord or to any other noble Lord, learned or the contrary, as to the manner in which this exceedingly difficult financial problem might be met, I can only say the Government would be extremely grateful to receive what advice they can on this subject, which is certainly not one which ought to divide Parties.

Now, my Lords, on the question of administration, to which I now pass, the real gravamen of the charge against the Estates Commissioners is that they have, I think noble Lords seemed to think under some pressure from His Majesty's Government, given an undue preference to certain kinds of dealings to the exclusion of others. Well, my Lords, we are assured by the Estates Commissioners that they have shown no undue preference. They have divided the different holdings into classes, and have endeavoured to start each section, so to speak, fairly, though it is obvious that one sort of estate takes far longer to deal with than some other kinds. I think my noble friend behind me gave the figures of the different amounts which have been advanced in some of the classes. For instance, during the last year direct sales took £4,150,000 as against £617,000 for land commission sales and untenanted land. I do not think that those figures bear out the contention that direct sales have been hardly treated in comparison with other sales. It is perfectly true that in certain cases the Estates Commissioners have had somewhat to hurry on sales under Section 8; and for this reason, that they have acquired estates which contain a number of uneconomic holdings, and in certain cases, therefore, they have had to hurry on sales, under Section 8, of untenanted land in order to make as far as possible economic the holdings on the estates which they have already acquired.

As regards inspectors, the noble and learned Lord in dealing with the numbers forgot to state what is the undoubted fact, that it is obvious that for estates coming under the later sections of the Act far more inspection is required than under direct sales. I think the Estates Commissioners put the proportion at two to four. Therefore it is natural that a larger number of the new inspectors should come under the category of those who do not work under Section 1. As regards the investigation of applications by evicted tenants, I understand that the eighteen inspectors appointed for that purpose hold purely temporary appointments, and that their term of office expires, on July 31st. Therefore it is hardly reasonable to count them as being in exactly the same category as the ordinary inspectors. There is no doubt that the needs of inspection have caused a certain degree of delay. Both Lord Clonbrock and Lord Ashbourne pointed out that at some earlier stages in the administration of the Act matters seemed to go faster. might not that be partly accounted for by the fact that it was the most simple and obvious cases upon which the first arrangements began to be made? I have one or two such cases in my mind, and I have no doubt that in those cases matters went like wildfire. It will be found as time goes on that the more difficult and complicated cases occupy more time in various ways than some of the earlier cases. There is another very fruitful cause of delay, and a very serious cause indeed, to which no noble Lord has yet alluded. This is the question of the investigation of title. I believe if anything could be done—I do not know that anything can be done—to simplify investigation of title a real service would be rendered to the administration of the Act.

THE EARL OF HALSBURY: Hear, hear.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: I was quite sure I should have the sympathy of the noble and learned Earl, Lord Halsbury, in saying that. He knows what a dead-weight of opposition there is when an attempt is made to proceed even a short distance in this direction, but if my right hon. friend Mr. Birrell finds it to be possible to proceed any further in that respect in any reasonable way I have no doubt he will receive the support of noble Lords opposite. As far as I can understand, however, there is no reason to bring anything like a general charge of inefficiency against the administration of the office. The noble Lord who initiated this discussion to-day gave several instances, one or two of them of a very striking character, and in a matter of this kind it always is very difficult to estimate how far one or two instances, either of red-tape, of inefficiency, or of some absurd action like that which the noble Lord stated, ougt to be taken as typical. Taken altogether I am informed—of course I have no first-hand knowledge on this subject — that it would not be reasonable or fair to bring anything like a charge of general inefficiency against the administration of the office.

Then the noble Lord, Lord Clonbrock, whose opinion on this subject is, of course, worthy of every consideration, mentioned the possibility of appointing some official in the nature of a chief of the staff who might be of use in organising a system of inspection and other details. I have no doubt that my right hon. friend the Chief Secretary will give full consideration to that suggestion. As regards the point which the noble and learned Lord dwelt upon a few moments ago, it surely is an overstatement to allege that the inspectors have the power of refixing rents. What I take it the inspectors are invited to do by the Commissioners is to form some sort of general report as to the value of the holding as estimated by the rental; and it seems to me that it is almost an essential part of a report that some such estimate should be made. It comes, however, to very much the same thing whether you pay a longer number of years' purchase on one rental or a shorter number of years' on another rental; and therefore, if the Estates Commissioners have to decide the number of years' purchase to be paid it seems to me perfectly relevant and reasonable that their inspectors should inform them what they consider to be the true value of the farm as expressed in terms of so many years' rent. My noble friend Lord Clonbrock made it rather a subject of complaint that it was technical evidence rather than what he spoke of as popular evidence on which these estimates were founded. I cannot help thinking that that shows something of the difference which has often existed between the way that we in England look at these matters and the way that they are looked at in Ireland.

LORD ASHBOURNE: Those were Sir Edward Fry's words.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: In what relation?

LORD ASHBOURNE: As a balance to technical evidence the Fry Commission used the term "popular evidence."

*THE EARL OF CREWE: At the same time you must remember that technical evidence points to what is called a valuation rent, and that popular evidence leads to a competitive rent, and it must be necessary sometimes to strike a balance between the two. It was the late Duke of Richmond who said that the English land system depended simply and solely on the fact that rents fixed by English landlords were valuation rents and not competitive rents. Therefore when I hear technical evidence decried I recall that wise observation from one who was as entitled as anybody to speak on the question. As to the £3,000 limit, I am sorry to say that I do not carry the Acts of Parliament either in my pocket or in my head, but I do remember that when Mr. Wyndham introduced the Bill in 1903 he spoke of the £3,000 limit as one beyond which they were not prepared to go, and one which had been adhered to in former Acts.

*LORD CLONBROCK: £5,000 was the limit in the previous Act.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: Then Mr. Wyndham must have been wrong.

LORD ASHBOURNE: In the previous Act the amount was £3,000, but there was power to raise it to £5,000.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: I think the noble and learned Lord is right, but £3,000 was spoken of at that time as the average limit. I think it is not difficult to see the reason which would prompt the Estates Commissioners at this moment to limit the amount as far as they could—namely, the shortage of money and the desire to carry out as many transactions as possible with the money at their disposal, instead of carrying out a smaller number of large transactions. As regards the general question of the regulations, it may be that the framers of the Act of 1903 made a mistake in leaving too much to the Executive, but my noble friend Lord Dunraven must settle that with the authors of the Act and not blame us for it. If he had desired to see all these matters put into the Act I have no doubt it could have been done. But so long as you leave the regulations to be made you cannot complain that they are made according to the best judgment of those who are responsible for the Irish Government at the time. I can only say in conclusion that we have no cause whatever to complain of this debate; on the contrary, I heartily re-echo the observations made by the noble Earl, Lord Wicklow, whom I was glad to hear address the House for the first time in an excellent speech —namely, that we shall do our best to meet this exceedingly difficult situation, so far as we can, although noble Lords opposite, who are far more deeply versed in this subject than I am, are aware of the great difficulties which surround the whole question at this moment.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: My Lords, I am sure I am expressing the views of all who sit on this side of the House when I say that we have no fault to find with the speech that has just been delivered by the noble Earl the Lord President of the Council. On the contrary, we appreciate the manner in which he has recognised the gravity of the question, and his assurance on behalf of the Government that so far as lies in their power they will give every consideration to the demands that have been made. I also endorse the concluding words of the noble Earl, in which he congratulated my noble friend behind me, Lord Wicklow, on addressing your Lordships for the first time in such an excellent speech.

The present block is doing considerable damage, not only to the land-owning classes, but still more to the tenant farmers and occupiers who are desirous of acquiring their land under the conditions granted to them by the Act of 1903. I should have dwelt at considerable length on the disadvantages occurring to the occupiers of land who are desirous of obtaining possession of that land had the question not been so fully dealt with by my noble friend Lord Dunraven. Lord Denman, who replied on behalf of the Irish Government, certainly dwelt with the matter in a very able manner, and I have no doubt that what he said as to the cause of the delay is to a certain extent accurate. If extra funds could be given—and of course I recognise the difficulty—to facilitate the working of the Act no one would rejoice more than I, and I venture the opinion, as having had considerable knowledge of the working of the Purchase Acts in the past, that any advance of public money for the transfer of land in Ireland is a sound and sure investment from the English taxpayers' point of view. As to the reasons for the delay, I go further and put down the block to a very great extent to the rules and regulations which were passed last year by the Irish Executive, these rules having very much increased the duties imposed upon the inspectors.

Allusion has been made to the Report of the Commission presided over by Sir Edward Fry. In the Report of that Commission it was very clearly pointed out that the great complication in the procedure was due to the rules and the methods of the Land Commissioners. The Report added—

> "We believe that delay would be lessened if, for reasons which will appear from what we have already said, the whole of the rules of procedure and practice in the Purchase Department were reconsidered."

What has been the action of His Majesty's Government? By altering the rules and regulations which were in force when they came into office they have drifted back to the methods and the system of inspection which were so adversely criticised by the Fry Commission. Under the present regulations the inspectors are required to estimate the judicial rents of holdings, but they have no machinery for dealing with this question. Mr. Wrench, in his Minority Report, differing from his two colleagues, stated that the Estates Commissioners had neither jurisdiction nor machinery for estimating the net fair rent. Then, again, Mr. Commissioner Finucane and Mr. Commissioner Bailey relied more on the technical opinions of professional valuers than on popular evidence. The Fry Commission defined popular evidence in this way—

> "Popular evidence, such as offers made, the letting value, the payment of rent for a length of time, and the prosperity or poverty of the persons who had held the land."

If you are to arrive at the value of a holding you must take popular evidence to an even greater extent than technical evidence. In my opinion it is the competition for an article which proves its value, and consequently popular evidence would prove the value of a farm much better than technical evidence.

On the contention that the Estates Commissioners have not a sufficient staff to go very fully into all the matters in question, I offer no opinion. I would like, however, to point out that the main object of the Act of 1903 was to promote the sale of land between landlord and tenant. The reinstatement of evicted tenants and the enlargement of small holdings were minor objects. The Estate Commissioners, however, appear to be putting the cart before the horse. At the present moment Mr. Finucane and Mr. Bailey seem to me to be devoting an undue amount of their time to these minor objects, to the detriment of the main object. I think the proof is found in the fact that they have both given a great mass of evidence before the Commission presided over by Lord Dudley on these two points—the reinstatement of evicted tenants and the enlargement of small holdings. The getting up of this evidence must have entailed a large amount of their time and consequently involved neglect of the main object of the Bill, which, as I have said, was to promote sales between landlords and tenants. Then, again, I noticed a speech made by Mr. Birrell a few days ago in another place with regard to the reinstatement of evicted tenants. In that speech the right hon. Gentleman stated that 2,000 of the evicted tenants were to be reinstated, and that the matter was to be dealt with by the Estates Commissioners. My noble friend Lord Denman admitted that the Estates Commissioners' department is understaffed, and yet we find Mr. Birrell proposing to put extra work on the Commissioners by entrusting to them this difficult and arduous task.

LORD DENMAN: I did not admit that the Estates Commissioners' department was understaffed

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: No, but Mr. Finucane did. Mr. Finucane has declared that his office is understaffed, and yet Mr. Birrell proposes to entrust to the Estates Commissioners——

*THE EARL OF CREWE: May I interrupt the noble Marquess? Is it quite certain that Mr. Finucane was speaking of his office as it is? Did he not mean that if more money was forthcoming for the purpose of advances then he would be able to have a larger office and deal with more cases? I did not understand him to complain that his office was understaffed for the work he was able to do

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: I have not the Report with me, and I must apologise to the House for not having brought it. But to the best of my memory Mr. Finucane stated that the delay was due to lack of funds and to want of staff.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: Yes, to want of staff arising out of want of funds. That is what I take him to mean.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: If the Estates Commissioners are to be entrusted with the extra work of going into the question of the reinstatement of evicted tenants, then they cannot devote the whole of their time to the carrying out of the main object of the Act. Such a course must interfere with the prosecution of the main purpose of the Act. Why could not some separate temporary body be appointed to go into the whole question of reinstatement of those 2,000 tenants? Then there has been introduced into the House of Commons another Bill—the Irish Land Bill (No. 2)—which will impose further work on the Estates Commissioners——

*THE EARL OF CREWE: I really must protest. The noble Marquess has already discussed some of the provisions of the Evicted Tenants Bill, which is entirely out of Order.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: Under the Bill now before the House of Commons it is proposed to entrust the whole of the inquiry to the Estates Commissioners, and I wish to draw attention to the extra work——

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (The Marquess of RIPON): My noble friend must pardon me, but it really is highly irregular to discuss here a Bill which is now before the House of Commons. It is contrary to all rules of debate, and I am sure the noble Marquess will not proceed further. The Bill will come up to your Lordships some time or another, and the noble Marquess will then have full opportunity of saying what he has to say with regard to it.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: I was merely pointing out that, although the Estates Commissioners are very hard-worked, you are putting upon them in your next two Bills additional duties. I think that if the Commissioners had devoted themselves entirely to carrying out the idea of the Act of 1903 there would probably not have been so much need for funds and extra staff, and the measure might have been a success.

Lord INCHIQUIN: My Lords, before the debate closes I wish to call attention to two points. The noble Earl the Lord President of the Council said it made very little difference whether you had a larger number of years purchase at a smaller rent or a smaller number of years purchase at a larger rent. It certainly does make very considerable difference. If I were to ask of my tenants thirty years purchase I fancy both Nationalist speakers and Nationalist newspapers would have a good many remarks to make upon it. Therefore I do not think that is a fair argument. Then there is the £3,000 limit, to which there is also considerable objection.

ST. HELENA.

Earl BATHURST: My Lords, I rise to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies: (1) What His Majesty's Government propose to do with the guns which have been left at St. Helena, and what arrangements have been made for taking care of the same; (2) Whether, in view of the depressed condition of the inhabitants of St. Helena, and the heavy charge to which the householders of Jamestown are liable for drainage and waterworks, amounting to nearly 15 per cent. of the value of their properties, it is the intention of His Majesty's Government to forego these charges, or remit any portion thereof.

The first Question would appear at first sight to be more properly one which should have been put to the noble Earl the Under-Secretary of State for War, but I have addressed it to the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies, because I understand that since the troops have been taken away from St. Helena the whole of the management of the Island has been handed over to the Colonial Office. When the troops left the Island the ammunition was taken away, but the guns were left in the batteries in which they had been placed. I will not go into the question of the guns beyond saying that some of them are of the newest pattern and were sent out in 1901, and when they were placed in the batteries the old guns were removed to the other side of the Island. The guns in question are now, I believe, in charge of one engineer officer and two men, and the object of my question is to ascertain from the noble Earl whether he thinks that these men are sufficient for keeping the guns in order, and also what is proposed to be done with the guns; whether they will be left there until war is declared and a body of men sent out to man them, or whether His Majesty's Government have considered the question of sending out a new garrison to replace the old one.

I should also like to ask whether the Admiralty have considered the question of removing the naval base from Ascension Island to St. Helena. In time of war St. Helena would be a strategic position of some value. Ships of all sorts would have there a harbour and refuge into which they could run under the guns and seek safety from the pursuing enemy. It equally applies that if the enemy, whoever he may be, chose to take possession of this Island it would be a very strong position for him from which to harrass the whole of our mercantile trade up the West coast of Africa. The question of the strategic position of St. Helena has been written upon by Admiral Freemantle, who, in a letter which has been shown to me, says that St. Helena could not possibly be left defenceless in war time, and that if this is so we certainly should have a small garrison there in peace time. I, therefore, hope that the noble Earl will be able to give us a satisfactory answer to my first Question.

The second Question is one of greater and more immediate importance. The case is familiar to the noble Earl, who has had considerable correspondence upon it. We have heard a great deal this evening about one distressful country, and noble Lords have been talking lightly of a grant of £500,000 a year. This is a much smaller matter, and if only £500 a year could be granted to the Island of St. Helena it would relieve a great deal of the distress. The facts of the case are that drainage and waterworks schemes were initiated by the late Governor. These schemes were started, I believe, because it was thought that the town was not healthy or sanitary for the troops. If it had been known that the troops were to be taken away from the Island the works would, I imagine, never have been undertaken. They were carried out by the present Governor at a cost of £17,000. Of this sum nearly £8,000 is chargeable to the householders, being payable in fifteen years in annual instalments with interest of 5 per cent. Some of the owners have taken advantage of the liberty they were given and have paid their share in full. I believe that up to December, 1905, £2,192 had been paid. The question is one of great difficulty, because some have paid who could not afford to and some have not paid who might have done so; on the other hand, a good many people have taken their savings out of the bank in order to pay their share of this expenditure.

Then, again, the cost of the works was 40 or 50 per cent. more than was anticipated. A petition was sent to the noble Earl by the householders respectfully praying that his Lordship would relieve them of this burden, which had fallen upon them in days of great distress, by releasing them from all payments of interest, by remitting a portion of the debt, and by allowing the remainder to lie in abeyance till trade improved. The noble Earl sent a sympathetic reply, but regretted that it would be unfair to the inhabitants of the rest of the Island that the deficit should be incurred by the Colonial Treasury solely for the benefit of the Jamestown householders, who form less than a total of one-half of the population of St. Helena. I hope, however, that the noble Earl will be able to reconsider this question, especially as he said at the end of his letter that he would be prepared to consider whether payment of interest might not be deferred in deserving cases where there was actual distress. I would ask the noble Earl whether, if these charges cannot be remitted altogether, the interest might not be held over for four or five years until the inhabitants are in a more prosperous condition.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The EARL of ELGIN): My Lords, with regard to the first Question put to me by the noble Earl, which would more properly have fallen to my noble friend the Under-Secretary of State for War, I have obtained information from the War Office that the guns have been left with a small staff, and they are being temporarily retained in the island until more permanent arrangements can be made. With regard to the suggested removal of the naval base from Ascension Island to St. Helena, that is a matter which has been under discussion, but up to the present I am afraid we have not seen our way to make the arrangements which the noble Lord suggests. No doubt there would be some advantages in the change, but there are also difficulties. With regard to the replacing of the garrison, the decision of the Government to remove the garrison was deliberately taken, and I am not prepared to say that they have any intention of reconsidering it.

As to drainage and waterworks, it is true that a total sum of £17,000 was expended on these purposes, of which only £8,000 was charged upon the island. Difficulty has arisen from the fact that the fittings necessitated by these works have proved rather excessive in the case of the inferior buildings in the town, and that may give rise to hard cases. But when the noble Earl asks me to remit all these charges, or to remit them for a number of years, I think on the whole the time has not come to do that in a wholesale manner, although we shall continue to watch the situation. It would not be fair, in my opinion, to put all these charges on to the Imperial taxpayer. The noble Lord has belittled the necessity for these works, but there was a very serious danger to health from their absence, and the inhabitants have, at all events, received value for their money, for in the final report the engineer says that a more complete system of drainage or a better supply of spring water than Jamestown enjoys could not be found in any town of its size in the world. I hope the noble Earl and the House will believe that we have very great sympathy for the inhabitants of St. Helena, and that we have done all we can to meet the difficulties of their position. What we think is the just course to take on this particular question is to have all the cases very carefully examined, and the Governor, who has been given full discretion, will, I hope, be able in this way to prevent serious hardship arising.

STRENGTH OF THE ARTILLERY.

VISCOUNT MIDLETON: My Lords, I rise to ask the Under-Secretary of State for War—(1) What is intended to be the future establishment of the Horse and Field Artillery; (2) Whether the number of Regulars, Artillery, and horses voted in the Estimates for 1907–1908 represent a decrease of 988 men and 1,024 horses since 1904–1905, when 20,303 men and 10,704 horses were voted; and whether any further decrease of regular artillerymen is in contemplation.

I venture to trouble the noble Earl with these Questions as the matter was left in some little doubt after the debate last Wednesday. We were originally told by the Secretary of State for the Colonies that there would be no reduction whatever in the strength of the Artillery, which was quite inadequate to the needs of the Expeditionary Force. Subsequently, however, the noble Earl the Lord President, in reply to a question, said there undoubtedly would be a reduction in the Regulars, although he considered that the strength of the Expeditionary Force would not suffer by that reduction. There was a very material difference, as it appeared to us on this side of the House, between the two statements, and I venture to ask the noble Earl to give us figures which will enable us to form a judgment ourselves.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Earl of PORTSMOUTH): My Lords, I have to say, in reply to the first Question, that, as the future establishment is still under consideration and not finally decided, I regret I cannot give the noble Lord any definite Answer. As regards the second Question, the noble Lord's figures are correct comparing 1904–5 with 1907–8. The decrease between 1904–5 and 1907–8 has been a question of gradual and not sudden decrease. The establishment of Royal Horse and Field Artillery, exclusive of India, as in the Army Estimates, is as follows:—1904–5—all ranks, 20,303, horses, 10,704; 1905–6—all ranks, 20,088, horses, 10,476; 1906–7—all ranks, 20,095, horses, 10,311; 1907–8—all ranks, 19,315, horses, 9,680. In 1905–6 one field battery was reduced on withdrawal from Egypt. In 1907–8, six field batteries were withdrawn from the Colonies and placed in the lower establishment. One horse and three field depots were reduced. The total establishment, including India, has been in 1907–8 increased on account of the formation of additional ammunition columns. As I have already said, the question of the future establishment of the Royal Horse and Field Artillery is now receiving the careful consideration of the Army Council, and we hope to be in a position to deal with any changes in the establishment of the Royal Artillery when Estimates are presented next year. I may observe that we have at no time proposed, or even suggested, the reduction of the total number of men available for Horse or Field Artillery. On the contrary, we have pointed out that there does exist at present a serious deficiency in the numbers required for the mobilisation of this arm. What has been proposed is largely to increase the total number of men available by getting on a Militia basis as many for the ammunition columns as can safely be used for that purpose. As a means to this end we have proposed in the case of the Field Artillery to substitute for a certain proportion of Regulars a much larger number of special contingent men.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: How many?

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: I am afraid I cannot give the figures, but, as I have said, a much larger number.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I confess that it is with some surprise that we have heard the Answer which has just been given by the noble Earl, who tells us that on all the essential features of this Question the matter is still under consideration. I should like to ask the Government how they reconcile the statement of the Secretary of State for the Colonies with the Answer of the Under-Secretary for War. It is very difficult for us to discuss the Territorial Army Bill if we cannot get definite information on this matter from His Majesty's Government.

THE EARL OF ELGIN: My Lords, what I understood, and what I believe my statement the other night carried out, was that, with the present establishment of men of the Royal Artillery, the Secretary of State found himself unable to man the full number of guns which he was advised was desirable for the new Expeditionary Force. Under these circumstances, he proposed to establish a system by which he brought in men on a Militia basis for the ammunition columns of a certain number of guns, and he distributed thereby the Royal Artillerymen over a larger number of batteries. If, by an arrangement of that kind, my right hon. friend is able to have ready at the moment when the Expeditionary Force is called upon the full number of batteries which military opinion thinks is required for that force, and is also able during the time anterior to mobilisation to maintain in various centres throughout the Kingdom batteries with a sufficient number of regular artillerymen to carry on the purposes of training, then I think the statement I made on behalf of His Majesty's Government the other night, that the strength of the artillery as a whole was maintained, was justified. The figures now given by my noble friend the Under-Secretary show, no doubt, that a certain number of the Royal Artillery have, as the strength stood before, been reduced over a period of years.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: And will be further reduced.

THE EARL OF ELGIN: My noble friend was unable to give the figures of the future establishment, but as soon as that is fairly worked out I am sure they will be given to noble Lords opposite.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My Lords, the explanation to which we have just listened is not one which we can regard as entirely satisfactory. Those of us who heard the speech of the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies the other evening certainly understood that there was to be no reduction in the strength of the Horse and Field Artillery. The obvious meaning of those words to us was that there was to be no reduction in the strength of the Regular artillery.

THE EARL OF ELGIN: In the *personnel*.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I do not in the least suggest that the noble Earl intentionally misled us—he is incapable of doing that—but a false impression was created. What we now gather is that a gradual reduction is, in fact, proceeding, and is likely to go on, although the noble Earl the Under-Secretary is not yet able to tell us exactly to what extent. These Regular artillerymen who are going to be diminished in number are to be replaced for certain purposes by men taken from the special contingent. They may be very valuable men, but they are not, and they cannot be, as valuable as Regular artillerymen. I have, in former days, very often taken part in discussions with the military advisers of the Government on this question of the strength of the artillery, and I always understood them to insist on two things. One was that we should have a certain proportion of guns of the Regular artillery to the number of 1,000 men whom we intended to employ in the field. That gave us one number up to which it was desirable to work. In addition to that, I was always told that it was desirable to have a sufficient number of Regular artillerymen in order to stiffen the Auxiliary Forces. As I understand the proposal of His Majesty's Government, it will be just as necessary as ever it has been to give the Territorial Army a proper stiffening of Regular artillery. The statement of the noble Earl is one which I regard as somewhat disquieting, and I do wish that, before this discussion closes, we could be told positively that no Regulars are likely to be reduced until these newly-created men of the special contingent really become available to take their place. It would be a matter of great regret if there were to be a sort of hiatus during which the Regular artillery would be gradually and steadily reduced before a sufficient number of men even of the Special Contingent were ready to take their place.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: My Lords, I do not think my noble friend has any ground for charging my noble friend behind me—and I do not think he did—with making an inaccurate statement on the former occasion. It is evident from the figures which have been given by my noble friend the Under-Secretary that there has been a slight reduction in the last few years in the strength of the Royal Artillery, beginning at a period before the present Government came into office. There is no doubt that the guns intended to be used by the Expeditionary Force were inadequately provided with ammunition columns; and the proposal of the Secretary of State is to meet this deficiency. The Army Council believe that the men trained on a Militia basis will be perfectly efficient for these duties; and we may therefore say that there will be no reduction, but an increase in the general efficiency of the artillery. With respect to the last point raised by the noble Marquess Lord Lansdowne, if a further Question is put to-morrow no doubt my noble friend will be able to answer it.

House adjourned at Ten minutes before Eight o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 1st July, 1907.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz.:—Pasley Children Legitimisation Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—York (Micklegate) Strays Bill [Lords]; Colne Valley Water Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the L rds, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.: Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time To-morrow.

General Accident, Fire, and Life Assurance Corporation, Limited, Bill [Lords]; Ocean Accident and Guarantee Corporation Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [Lords]. As amended, considered: to be read the third time.

Merthyr Tydvil Stipendiary Justice Bill [Lords]; Middlesbrough, Stockton-on-Tees, and Thornaby Tramways Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed.

Birkenhead Corporation Water Bill [Lords] (by Order). Read a second time, and committed.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to: Brighouse Corporation Bill, with Amendments.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confirm certain Provisional

Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Castleford, Egham, Formby, Grimsby (Extension), Liversedge, Maldens and Coombe, Mansfield (Extension to Mansfield Woodhouse), Paignton, Selby, and Stoke-upon-Trent (Extension)." [Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to dissolve the marriage of Gwenllian Pascoe Killery, the wife of St. John Brown Killery, a Captain in the Royal Army Medical Corps, with the said St. John Killery, and to enable her to marry again; and for other purposes." [Killery's Divorce Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise the Urban District Council of Broadstairs and St. Peter's to construct additional waterworks and to confer on the Council further powers in relation to their waterworks undertaking; and for other purposes." [Broadstairs and St. Peter's Urban District Water Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to enable the Alton Military Hospital to be utilised for the purposes of a Cripples' Home and College." [Alton Military Hospital Bill [Lords.]

Broadstairs and St. Peter's Urban District Water Bill [Lords]; Alton Military Hospital Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill [Lords].—Read the first time: Referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 261.]

Killery's Divorce Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; to be read a second time.

PETITIONS.

WEEKLY REST-DAY BILL.

Petition from London and other places, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EXPLOSIVES.

Copy presented, of Thirty-First Annual Report of His Majesty's Inspectors of Explosives, being for the year 1906 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3844 and 3845 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Copy presented, of Regulations for Secondary Schools (from 1st August, 1907, to 31st July, 1908) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

BOARD OF EDUCATION (CODE 1907).

Copy presented, of Code of Regulations for Public Elementary Schools, with Schedules, by the Board of Education [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC ACT, 1888.

Copy presented, of Report to the Board of Trade of Inspection of the Cromford Canal, under Section 41 of The Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

WOMEN ON LOCAL AUTHORITIES.

Copy presented, of Statement showing the number of Women serving on Boards of Guardians and other Local Authorities [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

WOODS, FORESTS, AND LAND REVENUES.

Copy presented, of Eighty-fifth Report of the Commissioners, dated 27th June, 1907 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 227.]

ISLE OF MAN.

Account presented, of Revenue and Expenditure for the year ended 31st March, 1907, with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 228.]

GLEBE LANDS (SALES).

Return ordered, "showing for each county the Sales of Glebe Land effected under The Glebe Lands Act, 1888, giving in each case the benefice or parish the situation of the land sold, the acreage, the purchase money, and the number of purchasers."—(*Sir Walter Foster.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Navy Votes and Cost of Vaccination, Etc.

Mr. LUPTON (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty under what heading in the Estimates the cost of vaccinating and the cost of vaccine matter are included; and what is the amount of the cost of vaccination and the cost of vaccine matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) Vaccination of officers and men in His Majesty's Navy is carried out by naval medical officers as part of their ordinary duty, no additional cost being incurred on that account. Supplies of calf lymph for this purpose are obtained at the cost of Vote 3, Sub-head H, of the Navy Estimates, the annual expenditure being £300.

Pensions and Compensations for Injuries received in Royal Dockyards.

Mr. BRAMSDON (Portsmouth): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state the number of persons to whom pensions and compensations or gratuities respectively were granted or paid in respect of injuries sustained in the royal dockyards during the year 1906, in pursuance of the scheme of compensation certified and adopted under The Compensation Act, 1897; also the total amounts of such pensions and compensations or gratuities; and will he state under which Vote they are accounted for.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) Pensions, compensations, or gratuities were granted to 371 persons. The total amount was £7,935 16s. 3d., which included gratuities amounting to £2,415 9s. 6d. to the dependants of twelve deceased workmen. These charges were brought to account under Navy Vote 15, Sub-head B. The above figures are in respect of the calendar year 1906.

Armourer Ratings in the Navy.

Mr. HART-DAVIES (Hackney, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether it is in contemplation to abolish the existing armourer ratings; and whether, in the event of a new rating being established instead of the higher armourer ratings, the existing branch will be allowed to qualify for it, and not be debarred from the promotion which they were led to expect on entering the service.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) No steps are being taken in the direction of abolishing the existing armourer ratings.

Hours of Duty in Strabane Post Office.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether it is part of the duty of the Post Office surveyors department to direct and to supervise the arrangement of the duties and the hours of attendance of the indoor officers employed in the various head offices within their districts; is he aware that no alteration in a duty chart so compiled can be permanently effected without the surveyor's consent; if so, whether his attention has been directed to the hours of attendance in the Strabane Post Office where one duty is spread over a period of fifteen hours daily and comprises a normal attendance of from 2.45 a.m. till 5 a.m., 10 a.m. till noon, and 2.10 p.m. till 5.40 p.m., and that between March and October the officer performing this duty is obliged to perform in addition overtime from 8 p.m. till 10 p.m., and also to that of two other duties comprised within fourteen hours per day and to which the same condition of liability for overtime from 8 p.m. till 10 p.m. is attached; is he aware that a term of these duties extends over four weeks, and that these hours of attendance are effected by a recent revision; and what course he proposes taking in relation to them, and also in reference to the surveyor's action in permitting officers giving such attendances to be obliged to perform overtime

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) It is part of the duty of the surveyors to supervise the arrangement of the duties and the hours of attendance of the staff employed at head offices within their districts, and no permanent alteration of a duty chart can be made without the surveyor's authority. My attention has already been drawn to the hours of attendance in the Strabane Post Office, and to the amount of overtime occasionally being worked there during the absence of officers on sick and annual leave. There has been no need to oblige any officer to perform overtime. A revision of the indoor force at Strabane is under consideration with a view to making full provision for the work.

Celebration of Saints' Days in Schools.

MR. MONTGOMERY (Somersetshire, Bridgwater): To ask the President of the Board of Education whether he is aware that under existing regulations affecting religious instruction in council schools, Lady Day, Midsummer Day, Michaelmas Day, Empire Day, Mafeking Day, and the 4th of July, are days in the year on which children, whose parents have expressed a desire to that effect in writing to the head teacher, may attend at a place of worship selected by the parents during the time set apart for religious instruction inthe school; and whether the celebration of these days as saints' days is to be henceforth regarded as the particular prerogative of the Established Church.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) I have no official information as to regulations of the kind referred to. If a concrete case is brought to my notice I will cause inquiries to be made.

Macclesfield Educational Charity.

MR. CLYNES (Manchester, N.E.): To ask the President of the Board of Education whether he has considered the communication forwarded from Macclesfield respecting the Miss Roe legacy for the education of poor children; whether the proceeds of the legacy are left unused or have been misapplied, and whether he can meet the request which has been made to hold a public inquiry into the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The Board of Education in November, 1904, advised the trustees of Miss Roe's Endowment (being the vicar and churchwardens of Christ Church, Macclesfield) that, in the altered circumstances of education, a scheme was required for the regulation of the foundation. The trustees appear to have acted rightly in accumulating the income (amounting to about £16 per annum) pending the establishment of the scheme, the preparation of which will be proceeded with as soon as possible. A question has been raised with regard to the application of a sum of £12 by the trustees some years ago, and this is being investigated by the Board. I do not think it is necessary to hold a public inquiry with respect to this small charity.

Government of the Island of Alderney.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can state how far the island of Alderney is under the government of parish meeting and how far under that of the States of Guernsey; whether the Lieutenant-Governor of the island of Alderney holds a separate appointment as such, or is the Lieutenant-Governor of Guernsey and its dependencies; how far the Channel Islands are being treated in the correspondence concerning the views of the Board of Agriculture as a single Government; and whether there is any authority common to the Governments of the States of Guernsey and the States of Jersey except that of the Crown.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The island of Alderney has its separate assembly of the States, and is not under the Government of the States of Guernsey. The Lieutenant-Governor of Alderney is the Lieutenant-Governor of Guernsey and the other islands thereto belonging. He does not hold a separate appointment as Lieutenant-Governor of Alderney. The Channel Islands have not been treated as a single Government in the correspondence respecting the proposed establishment of an abattoir in Alderney, but the authorities of the various islands have been separately consulted, because the Board of Agriculture are of opinion that it would be their duty to prohibit the landing in Great Britain of animals from any of the Channel Islands, in the event of the admission to any one of those islands of anima's brought from any of the countries from which the importation of cattle into Great Britain is for the time being prohibited. There is no authority, save that of the Crown, common to the Governments of the States of Guernsey and the States of Jersey.

Rates for Royal Dockyards.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury, in view of the fact that the £22,000 paid in lieu of rates for the ordnance factories under the Civil Service Votes is repaid as an Appropriation-in-Aid, and is, in accordance with business principles included in proportionate charges for all work done at those factories, whether the Treasury will consider the advisability of adopting a similar procedure in regard to Navy Estimates, and cause the Royal dockyards to repay as an Appropriation-in-Aid the sum of upwards of £60,000, which the Civil Service Estimates will in future be called upon to pay in respect of rates for the Royal dockyards.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) A comparison cannot well be made between the dockyards and the ordnance factories. Funds are not provided directly by Parliament for the latter, which are conducted like an ordinary trading concern, the actual outlay being reclaimed within the year from the Departments on account of which the work is performed. It is not proposed to alter the present practice as regards the dockyards.

Board of Trade Returns—Sugar Imports from Australia.

MR. PIKE PEASE (Darlington): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he is aware that according to the Annual Trade Returns of the United Kingdom the imports of sugar from Australia are 20 cwts. in 1898, 36,504 cwts. in 1899, and nil in subsequent years, whereas, according to the Colonial Statistical Abstract, 43rd number, pages 316–7, the exports to the United Kingdom from the Australian Commonwealth were nil from 1897 to 1903 inclusive, 27 cwts. in 1904, and 4,000 cwts. in 1905; and if he can explain these discrepancies.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The apparent discrepancies are probably due to the fact that imports are recorded in the official Trade Returns as received from the countries whence they were shipped direct to the United Kingdom. Since 1904, however, additional information has been separately recorded and published in a supplementary volume to the Annual Returns, giving the details according to the countries from which the goods were first consigned to the United Kingdom. A reference to the supplementary volume for 1905 will show the hon. Member that 3,969 cwts. of our imports of sugar in that year were recorded as consigned from Australia, a figure which closely corresponds with the 4,000 cwts. of exports which he quotes.

Date of Prorogation.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH (Fermanagh, N.): To ask the Prime Minister whether, for the convenience of hon. Members, he can state at or about what date it is intended that Parliament shall be prorogued in August, so that hon. Members may make their arrangements for the summer.

(*Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*) This must depend upon the progress of business during the remainder of the session.

Coal Exports.

MR. FELL (Great Yarmouth): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will state the amount of the exports of coal from this country for each of the months since the export duty was abolished compared with the corresponding months of the previous year and distinguishing smokeless from bituminous coal.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*): The exports of coal from the United Kingdom are classified into exports of anthracite, steam coal, gas coal, household coal, and other sorts.

Statement showing the Exports of Coal from the United Kingdom for each month from November, 1906, to May, 1907, inclusive, compared with the corresponding months of the previous year, and distinguishing the principal descriptions of Coal exported.

Month and Year.	Anthracite.	Steam.	Gas.	Household.	Other sorts.	Total.
	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
November, 1906 -	160,676	3,612,676	714,531	105,696	169,290	4,762,869
„ 1905 -	159,186	2,972,408	590,832	118,525	149,847	3,990,798
December, 1906 -	147,066	3,371,612	628,543	125,401	192,820	4,465,442
„ 1905 -	138,824	2,990,015	570,721	130,786	182,827	4,013,173
January, 1907 -	100,610	2,510,791	113,511	85,105	2,319	2,812,336
„ 1906 -	97,444	2,322,511	90,685	72,353	2,282	2,585,275
February, 1907 -	144,368	3,313,660	669,407	103,090	170,804	4,401,329
„ 1906 -	127,388	2,928,174	551,840	96,174	186,112	3,889,688
March, 1907 -	84,992	2,570,084	116,638	79,730	3,200	2,854,644
„ 1906 -	79,536	2,553,938	77,837	84,877	3,854	2,800,062
April, 1907 -	150,341	3,823,945	821,674	115,002	216,769	5,127,731
„ 1906 -	135,976	3,273,312	678,605	116,751	176,692	4,381,336
May, 1907 - -	90,530	2,937,498	147,485	96,166	1,747	3,273,426
„ 1906 - -	106,041	3,013,693	111,864	96,535	6,675	3,334,808

Post Office Saving Bank Depositors and Investments in Consols.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if the Post Office Savings Bank still continues to invite its depositors to invest their savings in Consols, notwithstanding the fact that such investments now show a loss of some £30 per £100, compared with ten years ago, under the administration of Robert, third Marquess of Salisbury; and if he will consider the desirability of poor persons being warned of the condition of the national credit before their money is accepted.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) I cannot add anything to the replies which I gave to the hon. and gallant Member on this subject on the 12th of November last, and that which I have just given to my hon. friend the Member for North Lambeth.†

Messing Allowance in the Army and Navy.

COLONEL LONG (Worcestershire, Evesham): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether in view of the much larger mess allowances made to the officers' messing in the Navy compared with those made to the officers' messing in the Army, he will endeavour to have the officers of the two services placed in a more equal position and the discrepancies of the mess allowances remedied.

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† See page 354–5.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.) The conditions of service in the Navy and Army are so widely different that no comparison can fairly be drawn between their emoluments; still less therefore is it practicable to select one item for purposes of comparison.

Customs Duties on Imports into the Australian Commonwealth.

MR. J. D. WHITE (Dumbartonshire): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can state what was the aggregate amount of the Customs duties collected on imports into the Australian Commonwealth from the United Kingdom during the last financial year or any preceding year.

(Answered by Mr. Churchill.) I have not the information for which the hon. Member asks, but I will ask the Governor-General if he can supply it.

Financial Losses in Connection with Irish Land Purchase.

MR. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will state under the respective heads of loss, all the financial losses incurred n connection with land purchase in Ireland in the three months ending 30th June 1907, and the total loss from 1st November 1903 to 30th June 1907.

(Answered by Mr. Runciman.) The figures given below complete up to date the information with which I have furnished the hon. Member on the 2nd May last.† To these should be added the sum of £102,000 appropriated from the amount paid from the Ireland Development Grant to the income account of the Irish Land Purchase Fund, as was explained to the hon. Member in a reply given by my right hon. friend the Chief Secretary on the 19th ultimo.

Quarter ending.	Arrears of annuities and deficiency of income.			Drawn for excess Stock.	Total. Drawn (+). Repaid (-).
	Drawn.	Repaid.	Net amount drawn (+) or repaid (–).		
	£	£	£	£	£
At 31st March, 1907 -	99,480	31,193	+68,287	116,308	+184,595
At 30th June, 1907 -	1,236	19,482	–18,246	35,111	+ 16,865
	100,716	50,675	+50,041	151,429	+201,460

Cost of Literary Section of British Museum.

MR. GINNELL: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will ascertain and state approximately the average annual cost under all heads during the last ten years of the literary section of the British Museum, as distinguished from the other sections of that institution, the amount of this covered by Parliamentary Vote, and the amount, if any, defrayed from other sources.

(Answered by Mr. Runciman.) I am not sure that I understand what section of the British Museum the hon. Member has in his mind, but I am informed that any inquiry respecting the cost of a particular section over a number of years would be

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† See (4) *Debates*, clxxiii., 1040.

extremely laborious, and I see no sufficient reason for asking that it should be undertaken.

Amalgamating Marine Artillery and Marine Light Infantry—Rumours of.

COLONEL LONG: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether there is any intention of amalgamating the Marine Artillery and the Marine Light Infantry; and, if so, whether the officers of the corps will be on the same list for promotion.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The reply is in the negative.

Finding of Wreckage.

MR. W. HOPE (Somersetshire, N.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether there exists any definition of the wreckage which it is the duty of boatmen who find it to report to the Customs authorities.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) By Section 510 of The Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, the expression "wreck" is defined as including "jetsam, flotsam, lagan, and derelict found in or on the shores of the sea or any tidal water," and by Section 518 of the same Act any person finding wreck within the limits of the United Kingdom must deliver it to the Receiver of Wreck, and if he fails to do so he renders himself liable to a fine not exceeding £100. By Section 72 of The Merchant Shipping Act, 1906, Section 518 of the Act of 1894 is made applicable to wreck found outside of and brought within the limits of the United Kingdom.

The Companies Bill.

MR. WHITEHEAD (Essex, S.E.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he intends to proceed with the Companies' Bill this session.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) I am still in hopes that it may be possible to proceed with the Companies Bill this session.

Stamping of Papers at the Patent Office.

MR. G. CROYDON MARKS (Cornwall, Launceston): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the long-felt disadvantage experienced by patentees in having their money refused at the Patent Office can be now removed, seeing that the new extension of the Patent Office is completed, by making such arrangements with the Inland Revenue authorities as will enable any documents and forms to be impressed with the necessary stamps upon the presentation of cash for such purpose at the Patent Office.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The question raised by my hon. friend was considered by the Commissioners of Inland Revenue in 1902, but the cost of adopting the suggestion was then held to be prohibitive. I will, however, communicate with the Commissioners again on the subject and will inform my hon. friend of the result.

Loans for Constructions of Buildings by the Ferro-Concrete process.

MR. WHITEHEAD: To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the adoption by local authorities of the method of construction known as ferro-concrete is discouraged by his Board; and whether his Board require a much shorter period for repayment of loans if this method is adopted than the normal period; whether he is aware that ferro-concrete has been proved both on the Continent and in the United States after many years experience to be durable and fire-resisting, and that it is about to be used in the construction of the new General Post Office; and whether, having regard to the importance of this question both to local authorities and to those interested in the manufacture of cement, he can see his way to treating loans for purposes which involve this method of construction on at least as favourable a footing as loans for construction with bricks and mortar.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) I am advised that it is doubtful whether ferro-concrete is a suitable material for permanent structural works under all conditions, and that there is need for caution in dealing with it. The Local Government Board have had under their notice examples of the failure of works constructed with it. I believe that this material is intended to be used in the construction of the new General Post Office, and it is the case that it has been used for some years on the Continent and in the United States, but its use has not always been successful. I am not at present satisfied that the periods allowed for the repayment of loans for works constructed of ferro-concrete can properly be extended.

Ordnance Survey—Pay of Civilian Employees.

MR. POWER (Waterford, E.): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether the rules as to rates of pay to civilian employees on the Ordnance Survey, laid down in the Report of the Departmental Committee appointed to inquire into the position of civil assistants employed on the Ordnance Survey, 1892, are still in force; and, if not, will he supply a copy of the existing regulations.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) The rates of pay in force in 1892 have been amended in several respects since that date. The alterations are practically all in favour of the men. The regulations as a whole are of a confidential character, and my noble friend does not think it would be of advantage that publicity should be given to them.

MR. POWER: To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, if he will furnish a Return giving the names of the civilian superintendents at present employed on the survey of the United Kingdom, with the dates and nature of their several appointments, the salary of each immediately prior to appointment to such office, the salary received on appointment, and the salary of each of these officers at the present time.

MR. POWER: To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, if he will grant a Return showing the various positions held on 1st July, 1890, by the twenty-two Board's assistants and others in charge of duties, etc., included in Appendix VII. (Report of Departmental Committee on Position of Civil Assistants employed on the Ordnance Survey, 1892); and a Return, similar to Appendix VIII. in the same Report, giving the number of civil assistants in receipt of the various rates on 1st April, 1907, and showing separately the numbers employed in Great Britain and in Ireland.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) Perhaps I may be allowed to give the Answers to these two Questions together. The grant of the Returns asked for would entail considerable expense and labour and my noble friend, as at present advised, does not consider that any commensurate public advantage would be gained by their preparation.

Licences for Horse and Motor Cabs.

MR. STEADMAN (Finsbury, Central): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can state the number of licences issued for horse-drawn cabs, likewise the number of motor cabs, up to 31st May, 1906; and the number of licences for horse-drawn cabs and motor cabs for the same period up to 31st May, 1907.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) On the 31st May, 1906, there were licensed 10,792 horse-drawn cabs, and fifty-three motor cabs. On the 31st May, 1907, there were licensed 10,251 horse-drawn cabs and 284 motor cabs.

Branch Post Offices at Hackney and Leytonstone—Female Staff.

MR. BOWERMAN (Deptford): To ask the Postmaster-General whether the opening of branch post offices at Hackney and Leytonstone have been under consideration; whether hitherto a male staff only has been employed in the eastern district; and whether it is intended to continue this practice.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The question of establishing branch offices at Hackney and Leytonstone, respectively, is now under consideration. If it is ultimately decided to open such offices they would, in the usual course, unless the local circumstances were unfavourable to their employment, be staffed by female officers.

Suggested Super-Tax on Irish Agricultural Rents.

MR. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been called to the resolution passed by the Lismore Board of Guardians and other public bodies in Ireland suggesting that, in order to facilitate the raising of money for land purchase in Ireland and to discourage landlords from obstructing the policy of purchase, a super-tax over and above the ordinary income-tax should be levied on agricultural rents in Ireland; whether he is aware that, while a large proportion of the landlords of Ireland decline to sell their estates, such a special tax on the agricultural rents received by them would go a considerable way towards making up for the losses at present incurred in the flotation of land stock and prevent inconvenience to landlords who are willing to sell and to their tenants; and whether he will propose such a tax at the earliest opportunity.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) I do not think the resolution referred to has been communicated to me; but the suggestion described in the Question is not one which, in my opinion, it would be practicable to adopt.

Stamp Duty on Irish Land Transactions.

MR. O'SHEE: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that on the Committee Stage of the Irish Land Bill of 1903 the right hon. Member for Dover and Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland, who acted with him, both undertook to consider the grievance created in reference to holdings purchased under Land Purchase Acts in Ireland by reason of the fact that on the sale or transfer of such holdings from the tenant purchasers, by private treaty or public auction, the stamp duty is chargeable not only on the actual money passing, but on the outstanding advance in respect of the previous purchase of the holding from the landlord; whether he is aware that this grievance has been accentuated by the fact that under the Land Act of 1903 landlords are receiving prices not previously dreamt of; and whether he will introduce an amendment of the law to remove this tax which constitutes an increasing burden on Irish agriculture.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) I have nothing to add to the reply which was given upon this subject by my hon. friend the Secretary to the Treasury on the 4th of March last.†

Provision of Funds for Restoration of Evicted Tenants.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is intended to provide funds for restoration of evicted tenants in Ireland or for the provision of new holdings, and money to stock them, by withdrawing money from the Irish Land Purchase Fund, or otherwise diminishing the moneys available for purchase of their holdings by existing tenants who have not been evicted for non-payment of rent.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Answer is in the negative.

Consumptive Immigrants into Ireland.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state how many persons have landed in Ireland from the United States and other countries within the last year to remain in the country and who were suffering from pulmonary consumption; will he say whether this serious disease is still on the increase in Ireland; and will he acquaint himself with the legislation at present in force in Australia and other British Colonies which deals with preventing the spread of this scourge, with a view to introducing similar legislation at once in Ireland and thus deal effectively with this drain on Ireland's dwindling population.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Irish Government have no information as to the number of immigrants into Ireland who are affected with pulmonary consumption. The proportion of deaths from this disease in Ireland has been practically constant for a good many years past, and in this respect Ireland shows a regrettable difference from the rest of the United Kingdom, in which the death rate from consumption has been steadily diminishing. The question of undertaking legislation for Ireland in regard to this important matter has already engaged the attention of the Government. I regret that I cannot hold out any hope of immediate legislation, but the matter will not be lost sight of.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clxx., 450.

Completion of Work at Boat Cove and Roads, County Kerry.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state when the Congested Districts Board will complete the necessary work at Boat Cove, Glen, and at Roads, county Kerry.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Congested Districts Board will have the landing place at Glen Boat Cove completed as soon as the weather permits and a suitable foreman can be obtained. The Board are awaiting a further report from their engineer before taking further action in regard to the removal of a ledge of rock at Roads Slip.

Re-valuation of Captain Hugh Henry's Estate, County Galway.

MR. HAZLETON (Galway, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland on what date the grass lands on the estate of Captain Hugh Henry, in the union of Tuam, county Galway, were striped by the Estates Commissioners; on what date were the names of the new proprietors with particulars of the land sold to them sent to the Commissioner of Valuation; and why the revisor has not yet visited the estate for the purpose of revising the valuations.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that they placed the purchasing tenants in occupation of the untenanted land in this case in November, 1905. In June following the secretary of the county council, with whom the initiative for revision of valuation rests under the Valuation Acts, included certain of the townlands in the annual list of tenements and hereditaments requiring revision which he furnishes to the Commissioner of Valuation, and the Commissioner, having obtained from the Land Commission particulars of the acreage of the allotments of the townlands in question, had the revision carried out at the earliest date which was possible under the Valuation Acts.

Delay in Construction of New Road from Snowy Glen to Straid, County Antrim.

COLONEL McCALMONT (Antrim, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what has caused the delay on the part of the Estates Commissioners in sanctioning the making of a new road from Snowy Glen to Straid, County Antrim, a distance of 287 perches, at a cost of £719, all parties concerned being in accord in the matter, which was sanctioned by the county council in 1904, previous to the tenants entering into agreements for purchase with the trustees of the Marquess of Downshire.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The purchase agreements relating to the portion of the Downshire estate referred to in the Question were lodged with the Estates Commissioners in July, 1906, and the case has not yet reached its turn to be dealt with. The Commissioners cannot identify the particular matter alluded to in the Question, but in any case the matter would not appear to be one for their consideration at the present stage of the proceedings.

Untenanted Land in County Westmeath.

MR. GINNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is now in a position to say what the Government propose to do in the cases of Messrs. Featherston, Gradwell, and Wilson, who have not answered the inquiry of the Estates Commissioners regarding their untenanted lands in Westmeath; and what steps, if any, are being taken to provide for the people who have petitioned to be allowed to become purchasers of portions of those lands.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that, as regards the estates of Messrs. Richard Gradwell and Wilson, the owners have not expressed their willingness to sell the untenanted land. The Commissioners have no power to compel these owners to sell. It is presumed that the third case to which the hon. Member means to refer is that of

General Richard Fetherstonhaugh. This gentleman has furnished particulars of 667 acres of untenanted land which he is willing to sell, and the Commissioners will have the land inspected in due course.

Fixing of Prices of Irish Land.

MR. GINNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will ascertain and state the practice of the Estates Commissioners in cases of sales to tenants within the zones, when the so-called judicial rents have been fixed not by any court but privately, without official inspection or production of evidence; how is the value of the respective interests of landlord and tenants ascertained and the tenants protected against buying what is their own; and how is the public protected against the consequences of the prices exceeding the gross value.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) In the first section of the Act of 1903 no distinction is drawn between judicial rents fixed in court and judicial rents fixed on consent or by agreement. The Estates Commissioners hold that advances must be made in all cases in which judicial rents have been fixed, provided that the prices come within the zones and that the holdings are included in lands declared to be an estate.

Housing Accommodation for Working Classes in Irish Towns.

MR. GINNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if any inquiries have been made or information prepared regarding the want of proper house accommodation for the working classes in towns in Ireland; and if he is now in a position to say that the favourable consideration which his predecessor promised to give to this subject will result in legislation next session.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Local Government Board are in full possession of the facts with regard to the housing of the working classes in the towns of Ireland. I am not in a position to give any undertaking as to legislation next Session.

Irish Land Purchase—Advances on Town and Village Holdings.

MR. O'SHEE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether, inasmuch as, under the regulations issued in February, 1906, under the Irish Land Act, 1903, the Estates Commissioners have refused to make any advance in respect of the purchase money of eleven village holdings at Clashmore, on the estate of the Earl of Huntingdon, and have also refused to make any advance in respect of twenty-three village or town holdings on the estate of Earl Fortescue at Dunmore, county Waterford, and advances in similar cases were made under the previous regulations, he will advise the Lord-Lieutenant to cancel the second regulation of February, 1906, with a view to enabling Irish tenants to get rid of landlords who are willing to sell; whether, in these cases, the security for at least a portion of the advances applied for would be sufficient by providing that the purchasing tenants should insure their dwelling-houses against fire; and whether, under previous Land Purchase Acts, there was any restriction on the making of an advance for the purchase of a town or village holding.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I beg to refer the hon. Member to my Answer to his previous Question on this subject on 21st June, when I stated that the Government have no intention of withdrawing the regulation referred to. The effect of this regulation has, I am informed, been to facilitate, rather than to restrict, the sale of town and village holdings under the Act of 1903. In dealing with applications for advances for the purchase of such holdings, it is the practice of the Commissioners to accept insurances against fire as collateral security for portion of the advances in cases in which they consider they would be warranted in doing so. Such insurances, however, cannot provide against the total or partial disappearance of the premises by dilapidation during the sixty-eight and a half years for which the land-purchase annuity would be payable. Under the previous Land Purchase Acts advances were not made on the security of houses, but on the security of the land, including the sites of houses, when there were any.

Irish Evicted Tenants—Case of John M'Enter.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have received an application for reinstatement from John M'Enter, son of Edward M'Enter, who was evicted fifteen years ago and died some two years after eviction from his farm, in Killymullen, near Drury, county Cavan, held under James Thompson; and if notice for reinstatement is not received will this be accepted as such.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners cannot trace the receipt of an application for reinstatement from the person named. If he wishes to apply he should address an application to the Commissioners giving full particulars of his case.

Payment to Land Purchase Fund from Irish Development Grant.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will say what was the actual sum paid to the Irish Land Purchase Fund from the Irish Development Grant for the years ending March 31st, 1905, 1906, and 1907.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) £50,000 in each year.

Licences (Ireland) Act, 1902.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Prime Minister whether the Licences (Ireland) Act, 1902, is to be renewed or allowed to lapse.

(*Answered by Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.*) Yes, this will be included in the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill.

Qualification of Women (County and Borough Councils) Bill — Suggested Extension to Ireland.

MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will take steps to extend the Qualification of Women (County and Borough Councils) Bill to Ireland, either during the passage of the Bill in another place or in this House; and, if not, whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce legislation of a similar character in the case of Ireland.

(*Answered by Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.*) If there is any general desire expressed by Members for Ireland for the extension of this Bill to that country an opportunity will no doubt occur to effect this while the Bill is passing through this House, but there is no intention of introducing a separate Bill for Ireland.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

H.M.S. "Victory."

MR. PIKE PEASE (Darlington): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what is the estimated cost during the present financial year of the upkeep and crew of H.M.S. "Victory"; and what has been spent on this service during the last three financial years.

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. LAMBERT, Devonshire, South Molton): The estimated cost of the upkeep and crew of H.M.S. "Victory" during 1907–8 is, approximately, £3,700. £11,700 has been spent on this service during the last three financial years.

H.M.S. "Dreadnought."

MR. FELL (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what is the estimated cost of the construction and equipment of battleships of the "Dreadnought" type when constructed under contract at private yards; and how much of that sum they consider to be profit.

MR. LAMBERT: The only vessel of this type under construction by private contract is the "Superb," and it would be contrary to the practice of the Admiralty to publish the figures as to cost at this early stage of her construction. It is impossible to answer the second part of the Question.

MR. FELL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty when H.M.S. "Dreadnought" is expected to take her place with the Home Fleet, and at what port on the eastern coast will she be stationed.

MR. LAMBERT: The "Dreadnought" has already taken up her place as flagship of the Home Fleet, and is now cruising with the Nore Division. She will generally be stationed at the Nore, but may be at the other naval ports on which the Home Fleet is based at the discretion of the Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet.

MR. GEORGE FABER (York): Is there any harbour on the east coast where the "Dreadnought" can be docked?

MR. LAMBERT: She can be docked at Portsmouth and at Devonport.

MR. GEORGE FABER: On the east coast?

No Answer being given, the hon. Member repeated the Question.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member has had an Answer.

MR. GEORGE FABER: With the greatest possible deference, Sir, I said on the east coast.

*MR. SPEAKER: I heard the hon. Member's Question perfectly, and I heard an Answer given. Two ports were mentioned. The hon. Member can deduce whatever conclusion he chooses.

Dover Promenade Pier.

MR. HART-DAVIES (Hackney, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether excursion steamers have been prohibited from making use of the promenade pier in Dover Harbour; and, if so, whether, in view of the public convenience, he will consider the advisability of rescinding this order.

MR. LAMBERT: The reply to the first part of the Question is in the negative, and therefore the second part does not arise.

Reserves of Ammunition.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the present reserve of small-arm ammunition is larger than that existing in 1904; whether this is also the case with the general stock of ammunition; and whether the supplies are based on an expeditionary force of 167,000 men.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): The present reserve of small arm ammunition at home is somewhat lower than that existing in 1904. The reason is that there has been a reduction in the number of Regulars to be provided for. This is also the case with the general stock, but both stocks are ample, and are based on scales which are the same as in 1904. The expeditionary force is of course provided for.

In reply to a further Question—

MR. HALDANE said the expeditionary force was provided for on a larger scale than under the old system.

The Artillery.

MR. LEVERTON HARRIS (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): On behalf of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what was the rank and file strength of the Royal Horse and Field Artillery on the 1st October, 1906, and the 1st June, 1907, respectively.

MR. HALDANE: The strength of the rank and file of the Royal Horse and Field Artillery on the 1st October, 1906, and 1st June, 1907, was as follows:—1st October, 1906, 27,910; 1st June, 1907, 27,089. This reduction in strength is due partly to ordinary causes such as the operation of the three years system, and the low number of men left at home at this period of the year, and partly to reduction of establishment. The reductions in establishment were caused by (1) six Field Batteries having been withdrawn from the Colonies and placed on the Lower Establishment at Home: (2) by the number of depots having been reduced, in the case of the Field Artillery by three, and of the Horse Artillery by one. The reduction of depots was a matter of administrative convenience and had nothing to do with any scheme. The total amounts given at the beginning of this Answer relate to batteries at Home and in the Colonies; if India be included the total establishments show a slight increase.

MR. LEVERTON HARRIS: On behalf of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he still proposes to reduce the Royal Horse and

Field Artillery by 3,700 men and sixty-seven officers, or by any other number; and, if the original proposal is to be abandoned, what is the amount of the reduction, if any, now proposed.

MR. HALDANE: The question of the future establishment of the Royal Horse and Field Artillery is now receiving the careful consideration of the Army Council, and I hope to be in a position to deal with any changes in the establishment of the Royal Artillery when Estimates are presented next year. I may observe that I have at no time proposed or even suggested the reduction of the total number of men available for Horse or Field Artillery by 3,700 or any other number. On the contrary, I have pointed out that there exists at present a serious deficiency in the numbers required for the mobilisation of this Arm. What I have proposed is largely to increase the total number of men available by getting on a Militia basis as many for the ammunition columns as can safely be taken for that purpose. As a means to this end I have proposed in the case of the Field Artillery to substitute for a certain proportion of Regulars a much larger number of Special Contingent men.

The Cordite Committee.

VISCOUNT TURNOUR (Sussex, Horsham): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty who are the members of Lord Rayleigh's Committee now considering questions arising out of defective cordite; and what is the estimated cost of the inquiry.

MR. HALDANE: Perhaps I may be allowed to answer the hon. Gentleman. The names are as follows: Lord Rayleigh, F.R.S., Sir J. Dewar, F.R.S., Sir A. Noble, Bart., F.R.S., Sir W. Crookes, F.R.S., J. A. Ewing, Esq., F.R.S., A. Dupré, Esq., F.R.S., absent through illness; Major-General D. D. T. O'Callaghan, president, Ordnance Committee; Rear-Admiral R. F. O. Foote, vice-president, Ordnance Committee; Lieut.-Colonel Sir F. L. Nathan, Superintendent, Royal Gunpowder Factory; Captain B. H. Chevallier, assistant to Director Naval Ordnance; Captain J. H. Thomson, H.M. Inspector of Explosives, Home Office; Major A. McN. C. Cooper-Key, H.M. Inspector of Explosives, Home Office; R. Robertson, Esq., Superintending Chemist, Research Department. Those not in the service of the Crown give their services gratuitously, and those who are in the service of the Crown are not paid extra for being on this Committee. There will therefore be no cost involved beyond a small amount for travelling expenses.

MR. BELLAIRS asked the right hon. Gentleman whether this Admiralty Committee was the same as that appointed by the Home Office.

MR. HALDANE said it had arisen out of that Committee, and the *personnel* was much the same.

The Royal Patriotic Fund.

MR. BYLES (Salford, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War will he state the dates on which the several annual meetings of the Royal Patriotic Fund Corporation for the passing of the annual accounts have been held, and on what subsequent dates those accounts have been presented to Parliament; whether the accounts for the past year are yet completed; and, if so, is there any good reason why they should not at once be laid upon the Table.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): The dates of the annual meetings of the Royal Patriotic Fund Corporation were 27th June, 1905, 24th May, 1906, and 3rd June, 1907; and the annual Reports and Accounts adopted at such meetings were presented to Parliament on 31st July, 1905, 11th June, 1906, and 24th June, 1907. The Reports became available to Members of both Houses of Parliament as soon as the necessary copies could be printed as Parliamentary Papers by the Stationery Office in the years 1905 and 1906, and the third Report is now in the hands of the Stationery Office for that purpose.

Indian Opium.

MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether there has been any diminution in the demand for Indian opium since the promulgation of the anti-opium edict by the Chinese Government.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. MORLEY, Montrose Burghs): I have no direct information as to the present consumption of Indian opium in China, and it may be some time before comparative figures are available. I may point out that the export of opium from India this year to foreign countries is estimated considerably below the average export of preceding years. It will be under 62,500 chests, as against an average of 67,000 chests in the five years ending 1905, and the decrease is mainly due to smaller consumption of Malwa opium in China.

Natives on Indian Council.

MR. HART-DAVIES: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India when it is proposed to appoint one or more Indian gentlemen to the Indian Council.

MR. MORLEY: I hope to make the appointment very shortly, but correspondence with India takes time.

"All-Red" Steamship Line to Australia.

MR. REES: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, since the meeting of the Colonial and Imperial Conference, a Ministerial Committee has been appointed to consider the proposal of Sir W. Laurier for an all-red steamship line, *via* Canada, between England and Australia.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): I have to refer the hon. Member to the Answer which the Prime Minister gave on the 29th May to a similar Question by the hon. Member for Hoxton.†

Johannesburg Tramways.

DR. RUTHERFORD (Middlesex, Brentford): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been drawn to the Johannesburg tramway by-laws, gazetted on the 17th May last, and especially Section 33, which empowers the council at its discretion to set apart and licence any carriage or portion of a carriage for the use of passengers of European race only, or for the use either of passengers of Asiatic race or of coloured passengers only, or for the exclusive use of both coloured persons and persons of Asiatic race; whether such legislation falls within that contemplated under subsection (a) of Section 39 of the Letters Patent, providing for the constitution of responsible Government in the Transvaal Colony, which requires the Governor to reserve any law whereby persons not of European birth or descent may be subjected or made liable to any disabilities or restrictions to which persons of European birth or descent are not also subjected or made liable; and whether there has been such reservation in respect of these by-laws.

MR. CHURCHILL: The section of the Letters Patent which the hon. Member mentions relates to laws passed by the Transvaal Legislature. It does not cover municipal by-laws.

Newfoundland Fisheries.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what progress has been made in the settlement of the Newfoundland fishery question with the United States; and when Papers will be laid embodying the representations made by Sir Robert Bond on behalf of Newfoundland.

MR. CHURCHILL: It is not yet possible to make any statement as to the negotiations now in progress with the United States Government as to the Newfoundland Fishery. The representations made by Sir Robert Bond will be found in the Blue-book containing the Report of the Proceedings of the Colonial Conference.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: Have any representations been made by Sir Robert Bond since the Conference?

MR. CHURCHILL: The matter may have been discussed, but I am not aware of any representations of a formal character.

Repatriation of Chinese Coolies.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can now say how many applications have been received during the present financial year from

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† See (4) *Debates*, clxxiv., 1656.

Chinese coolies of a desire to return home under the repatriation proclamation of last year.

MR. CHURCHILL: Inquiry has been made by telegraph, but an answer has not yet been received.

Colonial Office and Transvaal Correspondence.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether duplicates of official correspondence sent from the Colonial Office to the Governor and the Government of the Transvaal, and received by the Colonial Office from the Governor and Government of the Transvaal, are sent to the Agents-General of the Transvaal in London; and whether it is the custom to furnish the High Commissioners and Agents-General of the self-governing Colonies with duplicate copies of correspondence passing between this Government and the Colonies on the despatch or the receipt of such correspondence.

MR. CHURCHILL: No such general practice as is indicated by the hon. Member exists, but there is, of course, no reason why copies of particular despatches passing between the Secretary of State and the Governors of the self-governing Colonies should not be communicated to the High Commissioners or Agents-General whenever such a course is found convenient.

Central African Natives for the Transvaal Mines.

MR. REES: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether it is the intention of the Government to remove their veto upon the recruiting of Central African natives for the mines in the Transvaal; whether this question will be considered before the repatriation of the Chinese; and whether the most recent figures available show any diminution in the death-rate amongst tropical natives imported into the Transvaal for labour in the mines.

MR. CHURCHILL: No application has been made so far to recruit during the coming season. The Secretary of State is in communication with the Transvaal Government with regard to the mortality. Figures for the last detachment of labourers imported have not yet been received, but for the previous importations the death-rate, though still high, has dropped, owing to the men getting acclimatised.

Herero Refugees.

MR. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can state the conditions under which a number of Herero refugees are to be settled on the land of the Anglo-French Exploration Company in the Transvaal; and whether any special condition as to labour in their landlords' mines is attached to the tenure of their holdings.

MR. CHURCHILL: I have no official information on the subject.

MR. ASHLEY: Will the right hon. Gentleman inquire?

MR. CHURCHILL: I do not know that it is a matter on which it is desirable to inquire officially.

Transvaal Mines—Labour Statistics.

MR. MYER (Lambeth, N.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will give the number of Chinamen, Kaffirs, and white working men now employed in the Transvaal mines, and the increase or decrease in any of these classes of labour.

MR. CHURCHILL: In April, the last month for which official figures have been received, the number were, Whites, 17,886; Coloured, 114,470; Chinese, 53,164. For March of this year the figures were respectively: Whites, 17,861; Coloured, 112,914; Chinese, 53,679; This shows an increase in the month of April of 25 Whites and 1,556 Coloured; and a decrease of 65 Chinese. April, 1906, the figures were, Whites, 18,035; Coloured, 93,739; Chinese, 49,832. This shows a decrease during the last year of 149 Whites, and an increase of 20,731 Coloured and 3,782 Chinese.

MR. MYER: Are the mine-owners sending home the white men in order to prove the necessity for Chinese labour?

[No Answer was returned.]

Japanese Tariff.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can inform the House what stage the Japanese Government has now reached in the revision of its tariff, and upon what general principle the new tariff is to be arranged.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. RUNCIMAN, Dewsbury; for Sir EDWARD GREY): The revised Japanese tariff has been issued, and the text will be found in the Supplement to the Board of Trade Journal of June 14, 1906. It was to come into force on October 1st last.

Freights to Basra.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if there is any difference at the present time in the rates of freight paid for the transport of goods of the same class on German or British ships to Basra, and other ports for Bagdad, from ports in the United Kingdom or Germany; whether, if such conditions exist in favour of German trade, this is due to preference given by a German company to goods shipped by them in German ships from a German port; whether the effect of this preference is to shut out cheaper classes of British goods for which there is a large and growing demand in the Persian market; and, if so, whether His Majesty's Government can suggest any means for removing the disabilities under which British traders labour in that region.

MR. RUNCIMAN: My right hon. friend has no information as to whether such difference of freights does exist, but he will inquire.

Poppy Cultivation in China.

MR. REES: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to a notice issuing from the Chihle Office of Native Opium Consolidated Taxation, wherein it is stated that the growing of poppies is not to be discouraged, that if opium is suppressed a great source of revenue to the State will be removed, that poppy farmers are to continue their business as usual, in case any attempt is made to blackmail them under cover of the Imperial edict prohibiting the cultivation of the poppy; and whether he will inquire if this document was issued with the direct or indirect authority of the Chinese Government.

MR. RUNCIMAN: As regards the first part of the Question, my right hon. friend must refer the hon. Member to his Answer of the 24th ultimo to the hon. Member for North Hackney.† Inquiry will be made of His Majesty's Minister at Peking as to the last part of the Question.

Gold and Silver Traders' Licences.

VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH (Maidstone): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been directed to the fact that every person trading in or selling any article composed wholly or in part of gold or silver is compelled to take out an annual licence in respect of every place where his business is carried on, costing £2 6s. a year, where the gold in any article exceeds two pennyweights, or the silver exceeds five pennyweights, and costing £5 15s. a year where the gold in any article exceeds two ounces, or the silver exceeds thirty ounces; and whether having regard to the fact that this annual duty bears hardly upon a number of artistic workers in gold or silver, he will consider the desirability of freeing their industry from the peculiar tax at present imposed upon it.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): The duty is as stated, and yields about £36,000 per annum. It may, however, be taken that the purpose of the tax is not so much to produce revenue, as to afford protection to the public against the fraudulent sale of articles made of debased gold and silver, and I doubt whether the traders themselves, who pay the duty, would favour its abolition or reduction.

Savings Bank Investments in Consols.

MR. MYER: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the fact that the Government has in the past not only advised the purchase, but has actually acted as the agent in the investment of money for depositors in the Post Office Savings Bank in

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† See (4) *Debates*, clxxvi., 882.

Consols at prices above the present market value, he is prepared to redeem such purchases at par, so that these poor persons may not suffer loss.

Mr. ASQUITH: Facilities have been given for many years for the purchase of Government stock through the Post Office Savings Bank, but the Government has never taken the responsibility of advising such purchase. The terms upon which the bank has acted as agent for depositors in this matter have never been open to doubt, and there has been no guarantee—explicit or implied—against a depreciation in the market value of the stock so purchased. I can see no sufficient reason for giving preferential treatment to this particular class of holders of public securities at the expense of the general tax-payer.

Mr. MYER: Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the advisability of changing the system so that these poor persons may not suffer loss?

Mr. ASQUITH: No, Sir. I do not see how that can be done.

Terminable Annuities.

Mr. MYER: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will state what is the present position of the terminable annuities held by the National Debt Commissioners on behalf of the Post Office Savings Bank; whether there is a surplus or a deficiency on the capital replacement account; what is the amount, if any, of that surplus or deficiency; whether there is or is not a deficiency in the stock replacement account relating to the savings bank annuities of £773,637, expiring in 1924–5, created to replace £15,000,000 of stock cancelled belonging to those banks; and whether the Trustee Savings Banks Deficiency Annuity of £83,672 12s. created in 1880, and originally constituted to expire in 1908, but extended to 1917, is or is not at the present time short of the amount actuarially determined to be necessary to secure the full replacement of the deficiency at the postponed date of expiration.

Mr. ASQUITH: The terminable annuities held for the Post Office Savings Banks Fund are of two kinds—first, those which have been created to replace a certain amount of stock; and, secondly, those which have been created to replace a certain amount of cash. When the annuity is for replacement of stock, the law provides for the periodical adjustment of its amount on the basis of a valuation, so as to ensure that at the end of its currency the annuity shall have replaced exactly the amount of stock required. When the annuity is for replacement of cash, its amount is calculated once for all so as to replace that amount of cash within a stated period with interest at a fixed rate. In neither case, therefore, can any question arise of ultimate surplus or deficiency on the operation of these annuities. The Post Office Savings Bank annuity in replacement of £15,000,000 stock was last adjusted in 1903, and will be due for further adjustment next year. The Trustee Savings Banks deficiency annuity, as reconstituted by the Savings Banks Act, 1904, is not charged with the replacement of a definite amount of stock or of cash. It is a fixed annual payment of £83,672 12s. from the Consolidated Fund to the capital account of the Trustee Savings Banks Fund, which is to continue until May, 1917.

Loan for Jamaica.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer when the loan of £800,000, for rebuilding purposes, will be made to the Government of Jamaica; and from what sources it is proposed to provide the required sum.

Mr. ASQUITH: It is proposed to make the advance from the Local Loans Fund by instalments as the money is required. The necessary powers will be asked for in the Public Works Loans Bill of this session.

Sir GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the Government intends to issue a loan for the relief of Jamaica during the present year; and, if so, at what time.

Mr. ASQUITH: No, Sir. It is proposed, as I have just explained to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Worcestershire, that the loan should be made out of the Local Loans Fund.

Transvaal Loan.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer when he anticipates that the Transvaal Government will issue the short-dated securities which are to be guaranteed by His Majesty's Government; and whether His Majesty's Government will withhold their guarantee until the sanction of Parliament has been obtained to their proposals.

MR. ASQUITH: I cannot specify the precise date, but it will not be until after the necessary legislation has passed the Transvaal Parliament, and the issue of £1,000,000 may be by more than one instalment. No guarantee will be given by the Government until the proposal has been approved in principle by this House.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what are the purposes to which the Transvaal Government proposes to apply the £1,000,000 which they will raise by short-dated securities guaranteed by His Majesty's Government.

MR. ASQUITH: A full statement of the purposes to which the loan of £5,000,000 is to be applied will be made when the proposal for the guarantee is before the House. The £1,000,000 to be raised by short-dated securities will be treated as an instalment of that loan applicable towards any of the services to which the proceeds of the loan are authorised to be devoted.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Can the right hon. Gentleman give us no idea as to what the £1,000,000 will be appropriated to?

MR. ASQUITH: I am not able to say now, but full information will be before the House when the Bill comes on.

MR. LYTTELTON (St. George's, Hanover Square) asked whether the objects for which the loan was granted were specified to his Majesty's Government before the assent was given to the guarantee, and, if so, what objection was there to stating them now.

MR. ASQUITH: I think they have been stated by my right hon. friend the Under-Secretary for the Colonies more than once, but we will give full particulars of them before we ask the House for its assent.

Irish Land Purchase.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can inform the House of the nature of the arrangements by which he proposes to avoid any fresh issue of Local Loans Stock or Guaranteed $2\frac{3}{4}$ per Cent Stock for Irish land purchase before 31st December next; how much money will be required for each of these purposes in the interval; and how the required amounts will be provided.

MR. ASQUITH: At the present time the repayments to the Local Loans Fund in respect of outstanding loans are more than sufficient to provide for the new loans, and no difficulty is anticipated in providing for the loans this year out of the available moneys of the fund. The National Debt Commissioners expect to be able to supply the requirements of the Irish Land Purchase Fund for the remainder of the present year out of the moneys in their hands for investment, for which stock will be issued to them from time to time in respect of their advances to that fund. Owing to the nature of the demands upon the Local Loans Fund and Irish Land Purchase Fund it is impossible to make any precise forecast of their requirements to the end of the year, but I see no reason to doubt that it will be possible to dispense with any issue of stock to the public in either case during that period.

MR. LEVERTON HARRIS: What is the price the $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. Irish stock is issued at?

MR. ASQUITH: That depends on the market.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Is the money invested in Irish Land Stock Savings Bank money?

MR. ASQUITH: Yes, mainly.

MR. GEORGE FABER: Under what statute do the National Debt Commissioners take power to hold Irish Land stock at all?

Mr. ASQUITH: I had better have notice. There is no doubt about the power.

Captain CRAIG (Down, E.): Is not £30,000,000 required for Irish Land Purchase now?

Mr. ASQUITH: No.

London Motor-Omnibus Traffic.

Mr. CHIOZZA MONEY (Paddington, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been directed to the increasing nuisance caused by motor-omnibuses, and to the losses sustained through those nuisances by householders on motor-omnibus routes; if he is aware that many London thoroughfares are blackened by oil dropped from these vehicles, and that the clothes of foot passengers are frequently spoiled from the same cause; and whether, in view of the inherent defects of both horse and mechanically drawn heavy vehicles not run on rails, he can see his way to represent to the London County Council that the construction of a complete London electric-tramway system, to make omnibuses unnecessary, would be for the common good and profit of all classes in London.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.): My attention is constantly being directed to the whole question of motor-omnibus traffic, but I am disposed to consider that the objectionable features of that traffic show signs of diminution rather than of increase. The dropping of oil is being dealt with specially by the police and by an influential trade association. I have no authority to make to the London County Council any such representation as is suggested in the last part of the Question.

Welshpool Interment Scandal.

Mr. REES: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that, during the current month at Welshpool, a body was exhumed during an interment; whether he is aware that the only burial place Free Churchmen have at Welshpool is in the custody of the Church; and whether he will take such action as will prevent the recurrence of an incident such as that to which reference is made, which has given rise to considerable feeling in the locality concerned.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Yes, Sir, and I have already made inquiry into the case. I propose to take all practical steps to vindicate the security of human remains against disturbance which is demanded by natural and proper feeling and is provided for by law.

Police Traps and the Press.

Mr. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he is aware that the duties of the police are interfered with by newspapers publishing roads on which it is stated police traps are set for offending motorists; and if it would be within his province to strengthen the hands of the police by offering rewards to such persons who would give such evidence as would secure conviction of offenders.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am aware that the police are hampered in performing their duties by this practice, but the suggested remedy is one which, I am advised, would not prove effective and is undesirable on other grounds.

Mr. STANLEY WILSON (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness) asked whether it was not the fact that the hon. Member had himself been fined.

[No Answer was returned.]

Exports to Germany.

Mr. REMNANT (Finsbury, Holborn): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, in reference to figures recently given by him relating to exports to Germany, whether the item manufactures includes woollen tops; if so, what is the value of this item, and what is the approximate amount of textile wages paid in their manufacture.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Lloyd-George, Carnarvon Boroughs): Woollen tops are classed among "articles wholly or mainly manufactured" in the trade statistics of the United Kingdom. The value of the exports of woollen tops to Germany from the United Kingdom was £824,000 in 1904, £1,033,000 in 1905, and

£1,266,000 in 1906. No official figures are available showing the amount of wages paid to operatives engaged in the manufacture of such tops. I hope, however, that the inquiries now being prosecuted into wages in the United Kingdom will throw some light on this question.

Coal Exports.

MR. FELL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will state the amount of the exports of coal from this country for each of the months since the export duty was abolished compared with the corresponding months of the previous year and distinguishing smokeless from bituminous coal.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The exports of coal from the United Kingdom are classified into exports of anthracite, steam coal, gas coal, household coal and other sorts. I will have a statement printed in the Votes† showing the quantities of each description exported from the United Kingdom in each of the months November, 1906, to May, 1907, inclusive, with the figures for the corresponding months of the previous year.

Exports of Woollen Tops.

MR. REMNANT: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade what is the distinction drawn in the Board of Trade Returns between articles mainly unmanufactured and articles mainly manufactured; and whether, and, if so, why woollen tops are classed with articles mainly manufactured, whereas woollen noils are classed with articles mainly unmanufactured.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: With regard to the distinction between articles mainly manufactured and mainly unmanufactured I can only refer the hon. Member to a reply which I gave to a Question on the same subject by my hon. friend the Member for Chester, on April 24th inst.‡ The matter, which is too complicated to be dealt with in an Answer to a Question, is fully discussed in Cd. 2337, p. 236. Woollen tops have gone through stages of manufacture which entitled them, in my opinion, to be classed among semi-manufactured articles. Noils (like cotton and silk waste) are treated as waste products and classed with unmanufactured articles.

Sanitation of St. Asaph.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that the medical officer of health for the St. Asaph (Flint) district has expressed the opinion that the sanitation both of St. Asaph and Rhuddlan is unsatisfactory; and will he communicate with the local authority with a view to ascertaining to what extent effect can be given to the recommendations of their medical officer of health.

MR. MORTON (Sutherland): I beg also to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether in view of the recommendations made by the medical officer of health for St. Asaph (Flint), he will ascertain from the local authorities whether they will consider the expediency of dealing with the sewage of the villages of Meliden and Dyserth.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): I have just received the Report for last year of the medical officer of health, and I find that he refers in it to the matters mentioned in the Questions. I understand that the rural district council regard the Report as inaccurate and incomplete and have asked the medical officer further to consider it and submit it at the next meeting, when the various matters dealt with will be fully considered.

Calves for Calf Lymph.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will state how many calves have been purchased during last year for the purpose of producing glycerinated calf lymph and their cost; also the number sold during the same period, and the amount thus realised; and will he explain why the amount derived from the sale of calves by the National Vaccine Establishment is not indicated in the Estimates.

MR. JOHN BURNS: The calves in question are not purchased and resold, but a payment is made in respect of each calf supplied for purposes of vaccination, the calf being afterwards returned to the contractor. The sum paid during the last financial year was £860 17s. 6d., in respect of 505 calves.

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† See page 329.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, clxxiii., 34.

MR. WEIR: Will the right hon. Gentleman answer the last part of my Question?

MR. JOHN BURNS: I believe on investigation the hon. Member will find the information there. If it is not I shall be pleased to put it in.

Local Government Board Report.

MR. MORTON: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will arrange for the Report of the Local Government Board to be issued before the Vote is taken.

MR. JOHN BURNS: The Report is in preparation, but it will not be practicable that it should be issued before the Vote is taken.

Government Bacteriologist.

MR. MORTON: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board, having regard to the fact that the bacteriologist employed by the Local Government Board at the National Vaccine Establishment receives a salary of £600 per annum, will he explain why he is allowed to make a profit on vaccine lymph sold to the Local Government Board for Scotland.

MR. JOHN BURNS: The bacteriologist referred to has not hitherto been required to devote his whole time to the duties of his office, and he has received an extra payment in respect of his services in connection with the supply of lymph by the English to the Scottish Local Government Board, such payment consisting of the sum received from the Scottish Board, less the cost of producing the lymph supplied to them. The arrangement has, however, now been altered. The bacteriologist is required to devote his whole time to his duties; he receives an inclusive salary and no extra allowance is payable to him in connection with lymph supplied to Scotland.

Grants for Imbeciles in Workhouses.

MR. REES: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that certain boards of guardians are strongly in favour of the extension of the grant of 4s. weekly now made under The Local Government Act, 1888, in respect of each lunatic maintained in a lunatic asylum, to imbeciles and lunatics certified for treatment in workhouses; that the cost of maintaining lunatics in asylums and in providing asylum buildings bears very heavily upon local funds; that the Act of 1890 provides all sufficient safeguards against improper detention; that in some local areas ample accommodation exists in unnecessary workhouses which could be made available for the reception exclusively of such cases; and whether he proposes to take any action in the matter.

MR. JOHN BURNS: I am aware of the facts of this matter. Some extension of the grant in the direction desired was recommended by the Royal Commission on Local Taxation, subject to certain conditions. As I stated in reply to a previous Question, the matter will receive consideration when the subject of Local Taxation is dealt with by the Government.

Motor Speeds on the Bury Road.

MR. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he is aware that the speed limit of ten miles an hour on the Bury Road is habitually disregarded, and that the fines imposed prove no deterrent; and if he will consider the possibility of taking some steps to prevent privileged persons taking the law into their own hands.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers I would like to ask whether "privileged persons" include Members of Parliament, and whether the fine recently imposed on the hon. Member who asked this Question is a breach of privilege?

MR. JOHN BURNS: In the framing of the regulations by the Local Government Board no advantage will be given to privileged persons or to chartered libertines who ride in motor-cars. In Answer to the Question on the Paper, I assume that my hon. friend refers to the speed limit imposed by an Order of the Local Government Board from 1st February last in respect of the Bury Road, Newmarket, from "the Toll Gate to its junction with High Street." I have no information as to any disregard of the speed limit thus imposed, nor have I any power to enforce its observance. If the provisions of the Order are infringed, the attention of the police should be drawn to the matter.

Stornoway Mails.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is now in a position to state how the figures showing the number of letters and parcels respectively despatched to and from Stornoway last year compare with the figures ten years ago.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): The estimated number of letters and parcels dealt with in the Stornoway Office are as follows:—

Year ended 31st December, 1896.

Letters delivered -	458,328
Letters posted - -	353,704
Parcels delivered -	19,708
Parcels posted - -	11,180

Year ended 31st December, 1906.

Letters delivered -	863,824
Letters posted - -	679,224
Parcels delivered -	48,204
Parcels posted - -	24,128

As my hon. friend is aware, I am inquiring into the question of the postal arrangements at Stornoway.

German Lottery Circulars in the English Post.

Mr. FELL: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if the Post Office practically delivers the circulars advertising the Hamburg and other German lotteries without receiving any payment for the services rendered, as the German Post Office is not required to perform this duty in respect of similar English circulars; and whether he can take any steps to remedy this state of affairs and save the expense and loss occasioned to our Post Office.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: Lottery circulars sent in open covers, and thus recognised as lottery circulars, are not delivered at all. If the closed letters from Germany for this country include lottery circulars, the Post Office has not the means of knowing what are the contents, and must deliver them like other letters.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that a large number of enclosed letters dealing with these lotteries were posted in English towns.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON said he was fully aware of that, but the position he had taken up, which he thought the House would probably endorse, was that if letters were sealed it would not be right for the Postmaster-General to open them, but if they were unsealed they could always be stopped.

Teachers' Superannuation.

Mr. BYLES: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education is he aware that wide dissatisfaction is felt by elementary certificated school teachers at the existing rules for superannuation, under which each teacher is required to pay a sum of £2 to £3 and to continue the payment till the age of sixty-five; is anything returned in the case of death before that age; whether local school authorities have complained of these conditions; and what percentage of male teachers and of female teachers respectively actually comply with all the conditions and receive the pension.

The SECRETARY to the BOARD of EDUCATION (Mr. Lough, Islington, W.): I am aware that some dissatisfaction exists, but I think that is a feature common to most pension schemes. Teachers who are subject to the Superannuation Act are only required to contribute to the Deferred Annuity Fund so long as they are in recorded service. No repayment is made in case of death before qualifying for an allowance. I am not aware that local education authorities have complained of the conditions. All teachers who have contributed to the fund are entitled to an annuity based upon their contributions provided they survive to the age of sixty-five.

Royston School.

Mr. BRIDGEMAN (Shropshire, Oswestry): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education what are the dates of the Reports laid upon the Table on 22nd April of the local authority and the Board's inspector upon Mr. Milnes, who had been selected by the managers as head teacher for Royston School, in the West Riding of Yorkshire.

MR. LOUGH: His Majesty's Inspector's Report is dated the 26th January, 1907. The local authority's Report was conveyed to the Board in an official letter dated the 7th January, 1907.

Mutton for Members.

MR. REES: I beg to ask the hon. Member for Mid. Derbyshire, as Chairman of the Kitchen Committee, whether he will consider the propriety of substituting Welsh mutton for Canterbury lamb.

SIR J. A. JACOBY (Derbyshire, Mid.): In reply to the hon. Member, I am not prepared to substitute Welsh mutton for Canterbury lamb. I am informed that Welsh mutton is on sale in the London Market between the months of October and March, when I shall be pleased to have it supplied to Members.

*MR. REES: Is the hon. Member aware that he somewhat exaggerates, indeed immensely magnifies, the merits of the Colonial animal by describing as Canterbury lamb what might be more properly called New Zealand mutton?

MR. A. DEWAR (Edinburgh, S.): Is the hon. Gentleman aware that Scottish black-faced mutton is the best mutton on the market?

MR. WEIR: Will the hon. Gentleman consider the expediency of obtaining mutton from the West Highlands?

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): Will the hon. Gentleman see that Irish mutton is supplied? It is the best mutton of all.

SIR J. A. JACOBY: All these suggestions of hon. Gentlemen shall have the best attention.

Balintore Harbour.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state on what date the harbour at Balintore, Ross-shire, was last inspected, and by whom the Report as to its condition was made.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): The information was obtained by the Fishery Board through one of its officers in April last.

Sanitation in the Island of Lewis.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that, although the local authority in the Island of Lewis has for some years imposed the maximum assessment of 1s. per pound for public health purposes, it is quite unable, owing to lack of funds, to give effect to the recommendation of the Report by Dr. Dittmar, medical inspector for the Local Government Board for Scotland; and will he state why the Board have taken no steps to see that the Public Health (Scotland) Acts are not ignored in this part of the United Kingdom.

MR. SINCLAIR: I am aware and I am convinced that under these circumstances it is impossible at present to exercise further pressure upon the local authority.

MR. WEIR: Do the Local Government Board intend to pay no regard to this matter at all? Am I to understand that?

MR. SINCLAIR: No, Sir. The Local Government Board cannot exercise further pressure.

MR WEIR: I will put another Question.

Water Supply in the Island of Lewis.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, in view of the fact that no provision is made in the Small Landholders (Scotland) Bill for the supply of water in insanitary districts in the congested area of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, such as the Island of Lewis, will he state how he proposes to give effect to the repeated pledges in regard to such supply, especially bearing in mind that nearly every outbreak of fever in the island has been attributed to the defective water supply.

MR. SINCLAIR: Improvement of the water supply is a matter for the local authority, whose funds are not at present adequate for the work that should be undertaken. I can only assure my hon. friend that I am fully convinced of the importance of the question.

Aiguish Water Supply.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state why the Congested Districts Board, when forming the new township at Aiguish, Island of Lewis, failed to arrange for a water supply, as provided for under Clause 5, Subsection (3), of the Congested Districts (Scotland) Act, 1897; and will he state whether any arrangements have yet been made for a supply of water to the 32 houses of this new township.

MR. SINCLAIR: The Congested Districts Board, in ordering the settling of these tenants, were advised that the water supply was sufficient and came under no obligation to provide a further supply. No further arrangements have yet been made.

MR. WEIR: There never has been any water supply there.

Roscomroe Unlawful Assembly Prosecution.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether he is aware that at the third hearing of the charge of unlawful assembly at Roscomroe preferred against sixteen men before the Roscrea bench, when the magistrates for the third time disagreed, the Crown Solicitor said the Attorney-General would send the case for trial himself, they were not going to have three or four adjournments for nothing; and whether it is his intention to send these men for trial, having regard to the fact that a majority of the Roscrea bench, at the fourth hearing, refused informations.

THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. BARRY, Tyrone, N.): My right hon. friend has asked me to answer this Question. The Crown Solicitor has reported that he made no such statement as is attributed to him in the Question. It was one of the magistrates who remarked that the Attorney-General could himself send up a Bill at assizes. It is a fact that the magistrates eventually refused to receive informations in the case. My right hon. friend has since fully considered the case, and having regard to the fact that eight of the accused persons have already been returned for trial at the next assizes for a similar offence as regards the same farm at a later date, he has decided that it is not necessary to take further action in this case.

Gort Disturbance.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on Saturday night, 22nd June, an armed party attacked the dwelling-house of Joseph O'Donohue, near Gort, and fired shots through the windows; and whether the police have discovered the offenders.

MR. BIRRELL: The police have been informed that on the night of 22nd June, shots were fired at the house of Joseph O'Donohue, breaking two panes of glass. There is nothing to show whether more than one person was engaged in committing the offence. The police have not succeeded in discovering the offender or offenders.

VISCOUNT TURNOUR (Sussex, Horsham): Are they endeavouring to discover them?

MR. BIRRELL: Certainly they are.

Knockadrive Disturbance.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a report of a constabulary post having been fired into at Knockadrive, near Brosna, county Kerry; and whether any arrests were made.

MR. BIRRELL: The reply to the first inquiry is in the affirmative, and to the second in the negative.

MR. LONSDALE asked if the right hon. Gentleman could explain why there had been no arrests.

MR. BIRRELL: The police can only make arrests in a reasonable manner; they cannot go about arresting anybody.

Holly Park, Athenry, Disturbance.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a Report of an attack by armed men upon the residence of Mr. H. P. Blake, J.P., at Holly Park, near Athenry, on Sunday night, 23rd June; whether several shots were fired into the mansion; and whether any arrests have been made.

MR. BIRRELL: I have received a police report showing that several shots were fired into Mr. Blake's house on the night of 23rd June. No arrests have been made. The police have been instructed to afford full protection to Mr. Blake, and patrols have been ordered about his house at night.

United Irish League—Drumraney Branch.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether it has been brought to his notice that at a meeting of the Drumraney, South Westmeath, branch of the United Irish League, on Sunday, 23rd June, three farmers were compelled to apologise publicly for having assisted a man who had purchased an evicted farm; whether he is aware that the chairman, who is a county councillor, informed one of the farmers that this was his last chance of forgiveness; and what action he proposes to take with reference to the intimidation practised by the United Irish League.

MR. BIRRELL: I am aware that a statement to the effect mentioned in the Question has appeared in the newspapers. The meeting at which these proceedings are said to have taken place was held within doors, and the police have no evidence as to what occurred at the meeting.

Crime in Galway.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, in addressing the grand jury at the Galway quarter sessions on Monday, Judge Anderson stated that he had had no reports furnished him by the police as to the state of the county, and he could only judge of what had been going on by what he saw in the newspapers; whether the usual reports were withheld of set purpose, and whether the police acted upon instructions from headquarters; and, if so, whether he will state the nature of those instructions.

MR. BIRRELL: The Recorder of Galway is reported to have said that he refrained from making any observations on the state of the county because the police did not furnish him with reports on the subject and he had no information save that which he had gathered from the newspapers. It has never been the practice to furnish Recorders and County Court Judges with police reports as to the crime of the district. Such reports are furnished to Judges of Assize only.

Armagh Agricultural Grant.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a resolution passed by the Armagh Rural District Council protesting against the action of the Treasury in using the Agricultural Grant to meet the deficiency caused by the working of the Land Purchase Act, and thereby withdrawing the grant which has been given in lieu of the portion of the poor rate formerly paid by the landlord, and urging the Government to appoint a committee of financial experts to consider as to the cause and report on the whole matter, and devise some means whereby the proposed great loss to the local rates shall be averted; and whether the Government have arrived at any conclusion as to methods by which future losses arising out of the issue of Irish Land Stock can be made good without making further demands upon Irish Local Government grants.

MR. BIRRELL: I have received the resolution referred to. As the hon. Member is aware, the subject of Irish Land Purchase finance is shortly to be debated in this House, and it would not be convenient to anticipate the debate by making a statement on the matters referred to in the Question.

Roscommon County Council Chairman.

MR. HICKS BEACH (Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the chairman of the Roscommon County Council has become treasurer of the County Council Defence Fund, started on behalf of men who have been sent to gaol for agrarian offences; whether, in view of this gentleman's duties as a justice of the peace, his conduct has been brought to the notice of the Lord Chancellor; and, if so, what action has been taken in this matter.

MR. BIRRELL: Mr. John Fitzgibbon, chairman of the Roscommon County Council, has been appointed treasurer of the defence fund referred to in the Question. I understand that Mr. Fitzgibbon, though a justice of the peace *ex officio*, has declined to act as such, but in any event, the fact that he is treasurer of the defence fund in question, does not call for interference on the part of the Government.

Irish National School Teachers.

MR. HAZLETON (Galway, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether a national school teacher whose school hours extend from 10 a.m. to 2.40 p.m. is at liberty, not having any class from 2.40 to 3.30 p.m., the hour at which the school closes, under the rules of the National Board, to teach in an adjoining school after 2.40 p.m., at the request of its manager, subjects on the National Board's programme such as singing, mathematics (higher), or elementary science.

MR. BIRRELL: The Commissioners of National Education inform me that as a general rule a teacher is required to remain on duty in his own school for the entire school day as shown by the time-table. If the facts of any particular case of the kind referred to in the Question should be submitted to the Commissioners, they would consider whether an exception could be made.

Belfast Strike Riots.

MR. SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any attack on the police was made by the strikers in Belfast before the soldiers were called out; whether anything happened in connection with the strike which has been alleged as a reason for employing the military to overawe the trade unionists; and whether he is still in a position to state that no pickets have been interfered with.

MR. BIRRELL: No attack on the police has been made by the strikers in Belfast. The military were in no sense called out with the object of overawing the trade unionists, but simply for the purpose of assisting the civil power in preserving the peace. The police have not taken sides in the dispute, but have carefully confined themselves to their duty of securing order. I am informed that pickets have not been interfered with by the police or military. Persons describing themselves as pickets have been allowed to pass through the military cordons. I am in communication with the authorities in Belfast on the subject of the necessity for continuing the intervention of the military.

MR. SHACKLETON: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that seven out of the ten companies have come to terms with the workmen? Does this not show a peaceful disposition, and can he not see his way to urge the removal of the military?

MR. BIRRELL: I do not think the hon. Member ought to press me for an Answer. I must support the civil authorities in this matter. I am making myself fully acquainted with the facts of the dispute. Everyone will agree that the quicker it comes to an end the better.

Irish Court of Judicature.

MR. HAZLETON: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the present Registrar and Clerk of the Crown in the King's Bench Division of the Supreme Court of Judicature in Ireland acted, prior to his promotion to that position, as private secretary to the Lord Chief Justice; whether he still receives, in addition to his salary as registrar and clerk of the Crown, the salary formerly paid to him as private secretary; and whether the chief part of the secretarial work is, as a matter of fact, performed by a writing clerk who is paid out of court fees.

MR. RUNCIMAN: I am informed that the reply to the first two parts of the Question is in the affirmative and to the last in the negative.

Rostrevor Foreshore.

MR. MOORE (Armagh, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if the Crown has conveyed its rights between high and low water-mark on a portion of Carlingford Lough to Colonel Ross at Rostrevor; and, if not, under what title does this gentleman prevent the taking of sand and gravel from the shore there.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The foreshore at Rostrevor is under the management of the Board of Trade. The Board have not conveyed to Colonel Ross any foreshore at this place, nor have they received any complaint that he has prevented the removal of sand and gravel therefrom. Any such complaint that may be addressed to them will be carefully investigated.

MR. MOORE: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that Colonel Ross has put up a notice prohibiting people taking sand from the foreshore.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I am not aware of it. He has no authority from the Board of Trade.

Castleblayney Post Office.

MR. MOORE: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if the postal authorities have concluded their negotiations with the landlord of Mr. Fleming's premises in Castleblayney for the purchase of the same for the new Post Office; what price has been arranged, and what are the additional advantages which render these premises more suitable than the present Post Office; and do these premises comply with the requirements laid down by the official advertisement issued by the postal authorities for a site in Castleblayney.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: It is not the intention of the Post Office to purchase the premises in question. The landlord has arranged to pull them down, and to erect on the site a new building suitable for Post Office purposes, of which the Department will be the lessee. The new building will afford suitable accommodation for Post Office work, which the present office does not. When completed the new building will fulfil the requirements of the advertisement.

Irish Council Bill.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: I beg to ask the Prime Minister on what date it is intended to move the discharge of the Order for the Second Reading of the Irish Council Bill.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: This formality may be gone through at any time.

Peers and Parliament.

MR. HICKS BEACH: I beg to ask the Prime Minister when he proposes to give effect to the Resolution adopted by the House on Wednesday, 26th June, by introducing a Bill to define the relations between the two Houses of Parliament.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: That is a matter on which the Government reserve their decision, as I stated to the House when moving the Resolution.

Evicted Tenants Bill.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether it is intended to proceed with the Evicted Tenants (Ireland) Bill; and, if so, how many and what days are to be allotted for the Second Reading.

MR. T. L. CORBETT: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers this Question, may I ask whether he will consider the advisability of postponing the further consideration of the Bill until he has ascertained the opinion of the Irish Nationalist Convention?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Government are always ready to consider any advice. What we may think of it is another matter. I hope to be able to refer to this Bill in the statement as to the business for next week, which will be made on Thursday.

MR. MOORE: Will the Bill be dealt with in Committee of the House or in Committee upstairs?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: That is covered by the Answer I have just given.

New Peers.

VISCOUNT TURNOUR: I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether he proposes to advise His Majesty, in conferring the dignity of a Peerage upon the hon. Member for Colne Valley, Sir James Blyth, Baronet, Sir Samuel Montagu, Baronet, and Alexander Peckover, esquire, so to alter the form of Letters Patent hitherto granted to Peers as to bring it into accordance with the Resolution of this House ?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The noble Lord's suggestion that the four Gentlemen upon whom the honour of Peerage is about to be conferred should be constituted into a sort of House of Peers by themselves with different rights and privileges from their compeers is not an idea that has occurred to me or that commends itself to me.

VISCOUNT TURNOUR: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether we are to understand that the patents to be given to these noble Lords will confer the rights, privileges, immunities, and advantages which Peers of their estate have hitherto quietly and honourably enjoyed, although it is the right hon. Gentleman's intention compulsorily to dispossess them ?

MR. STANLEY WILSON: May I ask whether, before these gentlemen were granted this high honour, there was any stipulation with them as to their action in the other House ?

[No Answered was returned.]

PUBLIC HEALTH BILL.

Reported, with Amendments, from Standing Committee A.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 229.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 229.]

Bill, as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be taken into consideration upon Wednesday, and to be printed. [Bill 260.]

CRIMINAL APPEAL [EXPENSES].

Resolution reported: "That it is expedient to authorise the payment out of moneys provided by Parliament of the salaries of the Registrar of the Court of Criminal Appeal and his staff appointed under any Act of the present Session to establish a Court of Criminal Appeal and to amend the Law relating to Appeals in Criminal Cases, and of the expenses of taking shorthand notes and of making transcripts in pursuance of such Act."

Resolution agreed to.

FINANCE BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

Clause 1 :—

***MR. NIELD** (Middlesex, Ealing) moved to amend the clause by inserting the words "50 per cent. *ad valorem*, but not to exceed 5d." He said he had some excellent precedents for this Motion in speeches delivered by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite. The imposition of a high tea duty had often been deprecated on both sides of the House on the ground that it was oppressive upon the poorer consumers, to whom tea was a necessary article of food. He had it on the authority of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton that it was—

> "A tax which presses upon the poor—for a large section of our working classes tea is essentially an article of food."

The hon. Member for West Islington, who was specially well informed on this subject, had told them that—

> "In Ireland the poorest inhabitants depended on tea because it was the cheapest drink, and, therefore, this tax hit those who were dependent most on this form of food. Twopence in tax meant to Ireland £300,000 per annum, viz., from £900,000 to £1,200,000; it was an increase of 2s. 8d. per head of population, equal to 16s. to a family of six."

The hon. Gentleman had asserted further that the tea duty was a tax which ought to be removed at the earliest possible moment. The tax was not condemned only in England: it had also been the subject of bitter denunciation by Irish Members. The hon. Member for Waterford had declared that incomes of £20 a year in Ireland contributed £5 17s. to the tea duty, while they were informed by the hon. Member for South Donegal that out of poor incomes of £10, as much as £3 was spent on tea by a family of five, and of incomes of £25 a year and upwards no less than £7. He could not help quoting one phrase used by the hon. and learned Member in 1904—

> "Let them go into any of the abodes of misery in Ireland and they would always find a teapot there, whatever else there might be. Tea was the cheapest drink of the poor, and it cheered them without doing any harm . . . While 2d. increase in the tax would scarcely be seen in the case of the English people, it would produce ruinous results in the cottagers' homes in Donegal."

The Liberal Party had been equally eloquent in denunciation of the tax on tea, and undoubtedly many hon. Members of the present Parliament owed the substantial support they got at the election to the promises they gave in regard to the abolition of the duty. He thought they were all agreed that some relief at any rate ought to be given to the cheaper teas in the market—the teas which supplied the staple requirements of poorer families. The hon. Member for North Norfolk, speaking in 1904 from the Opposition Benches, said—

> "As he believed that tea was invariably sold in bond he could not conceive that it passed the wit of the Inland Revenue to devise some means by which an *ad valorem* duty might be placed on this commodity. That would do away with one of the great objections to the tax."

Again Mr. Henry Broadhurst, then the Member for Leicester, said—

> "The tax on tea was an unjust one when levied on weight . . . . The argument applied equally to tea as to tobacco. . . . Although the case represented by the Irish representatives might be quite true, he doubted whether there were not thousands of agricultural labourers in this country and casual workers in our streets who relied upon tea as an article of consumption and an encouragement to appetite, as did the Irish labourers. Tea and tobacco should be taxed according to their value, and if that were done a considerable cause of justifiable complaint with regard to those two taxes would be removed."

The present Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade and the president of the Board of Education in 1904 supported a similar Motion to the one he was now proposing. Indeed, the present Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade moved an Amendment against the late Government's Finance Bill in 1904, in identically the same terms as this one, and the hon. Gentleman was received with the cheers of his Party.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. KEARLEY, Devonport): I had just come back from winning a by-election at Devonport, and the House cheered me when I rose.

*MR. NIELD said that he had been unable to find in the official debates any reference to the hon. Member having been resworn a Member of the House, and he fancied he had been in the House sometime previous to 1904. But the hon. Gentleman, at any rate, thought the cheer was in support of the Motion, for he remarked that "it was evident from the cheers that his Amendment was an attractive one." And what were the arguments he adduced? The hon. Member said—

> "It was evident from the cheers of hon. Members that his Amendment was an attractive one. He was not surprised, for it was neither a novel nor an unreasonable one. Until about 1833 the system of levying duties was an *ad valorem* one. Up to that time the East India Company had practically a monopoly of all tea coming into the country—indeed he believed there was an Act making it illegal for anybody else to import tea except by the ships belonging to that company. In 1830, however, it became necessary to curtail and limit this monopoly because, as with all monopolies, abuses grew up, and consumers found themselves assailed by the exorbitant prices being charged. A Parliamentary Committee sat in that year and it advised that the monopoly of the company should be brought to an end as far as tea was concerned, and at an opportune moment the privilege was withdrawn. The Government accepted the opportunity of changing the system, and he believed it was in 1836 that a system of levying a simple duty came into vogue. This historical statement would show that *ad valorem* duties were possible, and that they had been practised in this country. What title had he to ask the House to agree to an *ad valorem* duty not to exceed 50 per cent.? He had taken some pains to examine the percentage of duty in relation to the cost price of tea in bond. He found that in the past forty years the percentage of duty to the cost of tea in bond had never exceeded forty-five. He was more generous than that; he wanted to levy an *ad valorem* duty equivalent to 50 per cent.; and, judging by the imports of the past, the tea duty would bring in as much or more than the varying duties of the past forty years. When the duty was reduced to 6d. in the pound, he found that from 1865 to 1875 the average price of tea in bond was 1s. 6d. per pound, and therefore the percentage of duty was 33 per cent. During the next ten years, when the average price was 1s. 1½d. per pound, it rose to 45 per cent. If they took the year when the duty was reduced to 4d., the year 1890, when the

> average price of tea was 10¾d. per pound, they found that the relation of duty to the cost price in bond was only 37 per cent. From 1890 to 1896, when the average price of tea in bond was 10d. per pound and the duty 4d., the percentage was 40 per cent. Thus for forty years, right down almost to the present year, the duty had never exceeded 45 per cent. in relation to the cost of tea in bond. How did they stand to-day? In 1900 the duty was raised to 6d. and now it was proposed to raise it to 8d. The average price of tea was 7¾d., and the duty would therefore be over 100 per cent. Considering, too, that an enormous quantity of tea sold did not fetch more than 6d. per pound, a duty of 8d. was altogether excessive. The Chancellor of the Exchequer would say that a system of *ad valorem* duty was altogether impossible—that it had broken down before and that it would be impossible to put it in practice at the present time. He denied this. It would be quite easy, because 95 per cent. of the tea sold was sold by public auction, and those who dealt in it did not buy in their own name but through a broker, who delivered a contract, which could no doubt be turned into a document sufficiently adequate for the purposes of the tax; and there would be no difficulty in merchants sending, as they did now, cheques to the Customs House accompanied by a declaration that the tea had cost so much and no more. Over 90 per cent. could be checked, because it was sold in this way. The rich bought high-priced tea, and therefore the proportion of duty they paid was smaller than that paid by the poor. It was the poor who paid over 100 per cent., and this was why he considered an *ad valorem* duty would be more equitable. Why did they not put some of the duty on coffee and cocoa, which mainly came from foreign countries, while tea came from India and Ceylon? Here they went to their dependencies, and if for no other reason than that it would bring relief to the Colonies and at the same time a great amount of relief to the tea consumers of the country. He begged to move."

Following that he wished to quote one other speech made on that occasion, but in opposition to the Motion by the then hon. Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield (Mr. Fitzalan Hope) which was somewhat remarkable for the prophecy it contained and the manner in which that prophecy had been fulfilled. The hon. Member said—

> "He was rather surprised that the hon. Member for West Islington was not yet in his place, but he took it that it would be rather dangerous for him to support the Amendment of the hon. Member for Devonport. It was possible that perhaps in a few years these hon. Gentleman would find themselves on that side of the House. In that case when the *ad valorem* question was raised what would the Chancellor of the Exchequer do? He presumed the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be either the hon. Member for Devonport or the hon. Member for West Islington. It was even possible that both of them would have to make way to the superior claims of the hon. Member for Oldham. In that event one of the hon. Gentlemen would have to console himself with the office of President of the Board of Trade and the other with the office of Financial Secretary to the Treasury."

It was curious that the prophecy had been so far fulfilled that one of the supporters of the Motion was now Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade and another was Minister of Education and had been Financial Secretary to the Treasury. From all the speeches delivered on that occasion there could be no doubt that a very strong feeling existed in favour of an *ad valorem* duty, if not a general objection on the part of the Radical Party to the duty on tea. The right hon. Gentleman who was now Minister for Education said—

> "If they were to have the tax on tea, why should it not be imposed in such a way as would not raise the price of tea to the poorest classes? The right hon. Member for West Bristol spoke of tea being taxed on the average of 75 per cent. of its value and the proposed addition to the tax would increase that to 100 per cent. He was told that tea was sold at present as low as 6d. per pound. If the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was to impose a duty of 100 per cent. *ad valorem* he would raise exactly the same amount. The result of an *ad valorem* duty of 100 per cent. would be that the cheapest tea would be sold as at present at 6d., while the consumption of the higher class of Chinese and Ceylon teas would not be decreased. If 2d. per pound were added to the price of the cheapest teas it would immediately diminish the consumption of them, but if 100 per cent. *ad valorem* duty were put on all teas he would leave the consumption of these cheap teas exactly where it was, and yet would obtain the revenue which he anticipated. He therefore suggested that the right hon. Gentleman should withdraw his Resolution from the consideration of the House and introduce a duty of 100 per cent. *ad valorem*."

Following that speech came one for the hon. Member for the Barnstaple Division of Devonshire who declared that—

> "They had long been anxious for a free breakfast table, but so long as the present Government remained in office the vision of a free breakfast table receded more and more into the dim and distant future. When one considered the incidence of the tea tax he was driven to the conclusion that it was not defensible. It affected the rich infinitely less than it affected the poor. Very few wealthy people had suffered from the heavy duties which had been placed on tea by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but on the other hand there could be no doubt that the poorest class had suffered to a very considerable extent."

It seemed to him that under the protecting care of the Radical Party, and notwithstanding their platform utterances a free breakfast table was as "dim and distant" as ever. How were they to be put in a position to be able to redress this grievance? The Anti-Tea Duty League had again and again extracted promises from candidates, and in particular from Radical candidates, that they would endeavour to secure the abolition of this duty. The more cautious Members (and he thought they had been more cautious on that side than on the Government side) refused to pledge themselves to reduce the duty, but when last year the proposal was made to reduce it to fourpence instead of fivepence, 144 hon. Gentlemen on the other side who had given their promises on the subject to the Anti-Tea Duty League forgot those pledges and supported the Government. He hoped the division on this Amendment would make those hon. Members realise that they had still an unfulfilled promise to perform, for it would afford them another chance to redeem it. In regard to the question of a "free breakfast table" he suggested that the consciences of many hon. Gentlemen would be seared with a red-hot iron when they were reminded of their promises by the Anti-Tea Duty League and of the material assistance which was given them in their election contests as a result, and in consideration of their promises. He was informed that an agent of the League, meeting one of those hon. Gentlemen in the lobby, reproached him bitterly for having forgotten his promise and asked him why he had supported the Government. The answer of the hon. Member was, "I had no option but to do it. Whiteley told me to do it and I did." [MINISTERIAL cries of "Name."] If hon. Gentlemen opposite were anxious to know the name of their hon. and learned colleague he would no doubt be able to obtain it, but he was quoting from statements made in a letter from the Anti-Tea Duty League. He thought if the truth were known the whole of these 144 Members might be put in the same category as the hon Member to whom he had just alluded. This was a matter for serious consideration. They had a tea duty standing at fivepence and they ought to take every means in their power to alleviate the tax in regard to its operation upon the cheaper qualities of tea. He did not mean that kind of tea in regard to which an hon. Member, speaking in reference to the Islanders of Orkney, said that by reason of the high duty and therefore high price of tea it was necessary for them to extract the last drop of tannin from the cup at the risk of ruining their digestive organs in order to obtain the beverage. He said that there were many other qualities of tea which would be drunk by the poor, and drunk cheerfully, if the duty gave them a chance of being sold at a reasonable price. He would ask those hon. Members who in 1904 supported the proposal he was now making to be consistent and to remember that there was something higher than giving a mere Party vote, also that this duty pressed most severely upon thousands of their poorer constituents, and to bring such pressure to bear upon the Treasury Bench as would induce their colleagues to reduce the tax by adjustment which would and could be obtained by an *ad valorem* duty and put it upon a reasonable basis. At present as the tax stood it constituted one of the most glaring anomalies in our fiscal system. He begged to move.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 21, after the word 'pound' to insert the words 'fifty per cent. *ad valorem*, but not to exceed.'"—(*Mr. Nield.*)

Question proposed, "That these words be there inserted."

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.) said the hon. Gentleman in the speech which he had made had, he thought, mixed up two questions which were not necessarily connected. The one was the general desirability of reducing the tea duty, and the other was the question of an *ad valorem* duty to which his Amendment referred. It was with the latter of these he would deal. Nobody was more anxious than he was to reduce the tea duty; in fact, he had reduced it already. It was sixpence when the present Government came into office and it was fivepence to-day. If this or any other tax was not further reduced it was not to be taken as an indication that in his opinion it should permanently remain at the figure at which it stood. The main argument of the hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment was that in 1904, when they were sitting on the Opposition Benches, many Liberal Members had spoken in favour of the substitution of an *ad valorem* duty for the present tax. His own withers, at any rate, were unwrung, for he took no part either in the debate or in the division; moreover, he had been looking at the division lists, and he could not find a single Member of the Conservative Party voting in favour of such a proposition.

SIR F. BANBURY (City of London) was understood to say that he voted in favour of it.

MR. ASQUITH said the hon. Baronet only showed the consistency which generally characterised him. But those who, unlike the hon. Baronet, had not the courage of their convictions had endured a conversion as rapid and as complete as that of his hon. friends. He might set them off one against the other and turn to the question on its merits. In the first place, the average value of tea at the present time was very little less than 8d. a pound, and a 50 per cent. *ad valorem* duty at fourpence would involve a loss to the revenue of £1,100,000, or if it was taken from 1st July only, of £800,000, before the end of the present financial year. That was a loss he could not see his way to sustain, and that in itself was a complete answer to the Amendment. But he must go further. Every Chancellor of the Exchequer for seventy years, whatever the Party to which he belonged, had steadfastly resisted this proposal. And why had they done so? Before 1836 the provision of tea to the London market was a monopoly which belonged by charter to the East India Company, and as they sold the tea by auction it was a comparatively easy matter to fix the price of the different qualities. But when the monopoly came to an end that security for fairly discriminating between the different qualities came to an end also, and although an experiment was made in the way of a graduated duty, it broke down completely, and Mr. Spring Rice, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, said in 1835 that, as the result of the experience they had had, they thought the time had come to fix a rate of duty on all teas. To require them to ascertain the particular quality of a tea imported was to impose on the Customs an impossible duty, and another important consideration was that the adoption of an *ad valorem* duty would offer a great inducement to fraudulent statements on the part of importers. He was not at all sure that it would be found, speaking generally, that the working classes consumed mainly qualities sold at below 10d. a pound. He believed that a large proportion of the tea they consumed would derive no benefit from this proposal. Therefore, on that ground, and on the ground of precedent and administrative difficulty, he was obliged to adhere to the position maintained for seventy years whatever Party was in power, and to ask the Committee to keep the tea duty at a fixed sum.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Wolverhampton, E.) said the right hon. Gentleman seemed to suppose that all the Members on that side of the House supported the proposal which had been made, but he had too keen a recollection of his recent responsibilities to support the Amendment. If he might say so without egoism, when he listened to the Chancellor of the Exchequer he felt that the right hon. Gentleman was travelling over ground that was familiar to him, and that he was putting his foot down step by step exactly in the places where he, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, had put his foot. The hon. Members for Devonport and West Islington when in opposition had sat side by side on the Opposition side of the House and they habitually supported each other and showed a unanimity which was remarkable. But when this question arose there was a fierce conflict between the allies. The case stated by the hon. Member for Devonport had the bottom knocked out of it by the hon. Member for Islington, and the case stated by the hon. Member for West Islington had the bottom knocked out of it by the hon. Member for Devonport. The hon. Member for West Islington said he was always averse to these proposals and was opposed to this Amendment, but he found from *Hansard* that on the last occasion on which they discussed the matter the hon. Member for Devonport said he had succeeded in converting the hon. Member for West Islington and he found that the latter voted for this iniquitous proposal. No doubt, however, the hon. Member was carried away by a desire to vote against the Government for once. Personally he agreed with what the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said on the merits of the question. There was something attractive in the idea of turning a specific into an *ad valorem* duty. It was not always possible to work it out in practice, and in the case of the tea duty it was increasingly difficult to do so. There was a time when all tea was sold at public auction, but he thought that now a larger proportion year by year never passed through public auction at all. Great firms on this side had begun to interest themselves in tea plantations and now imported their own tea, which was therefore never subjected to a public sale. He was quite sure that if the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave way to his hon. friend he would meet with very great opposition from the trade, which, so far as he had been able to gather their views, would regard with horror anything in the nature of converting the impost into an *ad valorem* duty. When as Chancellor of the Exchequer he received a deputation from the trade on this matter, he put the question to them, "Do you wish to have an *ad valorem* duty instead of a specific duty?" and they replied with one voice "Certainly not." Therefore it was a dishonest argument to present that the tea duty was unjust because it was not *ad valorem.* That argument could only be used honestly by those who were prepared to replace the present duty by an *ad valorem* duty. It was because he thought it would result in a great disturbance to trade that he would not support the Amendment, and he also agreed that in many cases it would result in a higher tax being paid by the poor though not by others. He remembered on one occasion he was very anxious to get information as to Irish budgets, and he consulted some very interesting evidence given in a report of the Congested Districts Board as to the expenditure of certain families on tea. It was very high, but the price was not mentioned. He then made inquiries of Irish Members as to the number of pounds purchased. He was told in reply that he might take it for certain that the Irish peasant purchased good tea and would not have anything else. He believed the same to be true very largely of our own working classes. The hon. Member for West Islington used to say that it was a mistake to suppose that poor people bought cheap tea, that on the contrary it was the mean rich people who bought cheap tea to give to their servants. It was, he thought, wrong to assume that cheap tea was bought by people who had to live on these small budgets. They kept a very sharp eye on quality as well as price. If the hon. Member went to a division he would with regret find himself voting against him and in favour of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) said the right hon. Gentleman had quite correctly represented the state of affairs in Ireland, and he might have found better authority than a casual conversation with Irishmen on the subject as to the kind of tea taken by the Irish people. It came out clearly in the evidence given before the Financial Relations Commission that in the poorest parts of Ireland what might be regarded as expensive tea was consumed. As a matter of fact, taking Ireland as a whole, he believed it could be shown that more expensive tea was used in Ireland than in England, and the same thing could be proved in reference to tobacco. He was in favour of every possible reduction of the tea duty, and he saw that some hon. Members had Motions for the reduction of the duty. He would vote in favour of every one of those, because he considered that a high tea duty inflicted great hardship upon the poor people in every part of the country, especially in certain districts in Ireland. He would not, however, vote in favour of the Amendment before the House, because he did not think it would give any relief at all.

SIR F. BANBURY thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer was a little premature in saying hon. Members on the Opposition Benches had changed their views almost as quickly as they had changed their seats. The right hon. Gentleman now found there were two, and probably if a division was taken he would find there were a few more, who had not. The hon. Member who moved the Amendment was not a Member of the House in 1904, and therefore he was sincere in moving his Amendment. [Laughter.] He did not know why hon. Members laughed, unless it was that they were not sincere. There were four Cabinet Ministers—the Postmaster-General, the Chancellor of the Duchy, the Secretary of State for War, and the Home Secretary—all of whom voted for this Amendment a short time ago. The Postmaster-General went still further, because he had said when on this side they were sincere in supporting this Amendment, and that those opposed to them were only obstructing, and he was called to order by Mr. Speaker for imputing motives. Let them now see who really was sincere. He himself was going to vote for the Chancellor of the Exchequer. What was the Postmaster-General going to do?

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said that, as he had been referred to, he might say that if the hon. Gentleman had read a little further he would have seen that he did not express himself as being in favour of the Amendment, but that he voted for it because if it were carried it would upset the balance of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and a larger amount would then have to go on to direct and less on indirect taxation.

SIR F. BANBURY thought that by his explanation the right hon. Gentleman had placed himself in a still more awkward position. He hoped his hon. friend would go to a division in order that they might see who on both sides really regarded the pledges they had made. He appreciated the difficulty of hon. Members opposite who with the object of assisting the poor—he could see the posters now—had said that over 100 per cent. was charged upon tea, that it was an injustice to the many poor who consumed the cheaper article, and that the rich man was picked out to obtain the benefit. Now that they were in power with an overwhelming majority they used the same arguments that those now in Opposition used four years ago, and 146 who voted for this Amendment then were going to eat their words. The Committee owed a debt of gratitude to his hon. friend for moving the Amendment, and he hoped the debate would be reported in the Radical newspapers.

AN. HON. MEMBER: It will not be.

*MR. GEORGE FABER (York) said it was not his intention to follow the hon. baronet into a matter involving the fiscal morality of hon. Gentlemen opposite. He was not in the least surprised that they should have left undone what they ought to have done and done that which they ought not to have done. When they were in opposition they spoke emphatically for the very policy which they were now opposing. Apart from any question of Party politics, he must confess that in this matter he was against the Amendment, and in favour of the line adopted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, because a lower *ad valorem* duty would not assist the poorer classes, and would open the door to fraud. The right hon. Gentleman the ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer said cheap tea was only purchased by mean rich people for the use of their servants. If that were so, he thought that what would ultimately find its way into the family teapot would be the cheap tea which was obtained for the servants, and the servants in their turn would enjoy a cup of that most salutary fluid at the higher price paid by the master.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said the language was not his own. He was only quoting the present Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education.

*MR. GEORGE FABER said he must apologise for having attributed the words to the right hon. Gentleman. In his carelessness he had thought that it was the right hon. Gentleman who was giving way to those somewhat extraordinary sentiments, whereas he was only quoting the hon. Gentleman opposite. He was rather surprised that that hon. Member now in a high position should have enunciated such sentiments. He was informed by an hon. friend behind him that there was only one occasion in the annals of the House on which a certified lunatic took part in a division, and the division in which he took part was in support of an *ad valorem* tea duty. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Name!"] He had no doubt if the annals of the House were searched they would show the name, but so many years had elapsed since that took place that doubtless in the ordinary course of nature the generation in question had long since passed to that bourne from which no traveller returned. If the matter went to a division he would be obliged to vote against the Amendment for the reasons he had given.

*MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs) said the right hon. Gentleman opposite had referred to the placards and posters issued by the Anti-Tea Duty League, of which he was the only one of the Vice-Presidents who happened to be a Member of the House. When the right hon. Gentleman said that placards and posters and what not were issued recommending that an *ad valorem* duty should be adopted, he thought he was in error; he did not think they asked for that. What they asked was a reduction of the tea duty. The percentages to which the right hon. Gentleman had referred were merely illustrations; but they did not urge upon the Government that there should be an *ad valorem* duty. He might be wrong, but that was his impression. Doubtless it might be considered that some of those placards were rather highly spiced. His own taste in such matters was simple, and he thought they were. But he would point out that this was the reason why the Anti-Tea Duty League had dispensed with the services of their highly energetic and capable secretary, who was immediately responsible for those posters, and who had probably in some cases issued them without first submitting them for assent to those who directed the League. [AN HON. MEMBER: After the election.] As the right hon. Gentleman had referred to the League and to his own responsibility he had told them what he had got to say with regard to its action. It was quite true that he had previously written a pamphlet on the subject of the tea duty, and this was issued by the league among their pamphlets. If the right hon. Gentleman would confront him with any statement in that pamphlet of which it could be shown that he ought to be ashamed, or should depart from, in any way, he would be very much astonished. He thought the right hon. Gentleman's solicitude for the tea planters was rather belated. The tea planters did not regard the Government of which he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, and which raised the duty on tea. as particularly friendly to them, and they were the best judges of what was done with their money, and not any hon. or right hon. Gentleman in this House. He understood that they were at any rate more satisfied with the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, and were grateful to him for having taken a penny off that tax, and believed that he intended to take off another penny, as, he thought, the right hon. Gentleman had that day as good as promised to do. An *ad valorem* duty would disturb the balance of the Budget, and for his part he was going to vote against the Amendment.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 18; Noes, 212. (Division List No. 255.)

AYES.

Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bull, Sir William James
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Carlile, E. Hildred
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig,Charles Curtis(Antrim, S.
Craig,Captain James(Down,E.)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Marks, H. H. (Kent)
Moore, William
Morpeth, Viscount
Percy, Earl
Stanley,Hon Arthur(Ormskirk
Turnour, Viscount
Walrond, Hon. Lionel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Nield and Mr. Fell.

NOES.

Ashley, W. W.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith,Rt.Hon HerbertHenry
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt.Hon.SirH.
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Baring,Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Baring,Capt.Hn.G.(Winchester
Barlow, Sir John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barry, Redmond J. (Tyrone,N.
Beale, W. P.
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Belloc, Hilaire Joseph Peter R.
Bennett, E. N.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell,SirJ.H (Essex,Romford
Billson, Sir Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Boulton, A. C. F.
Branch, James
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Brunner,J.F.L. (Lancs.,Leigh)
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt.Hn. SydneyCharles
Byles, William Pollard
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Causton,Rt.Hn.RichardKnight
Cavendish, Rt.Hon.VictorC.W.
Chamberlain,RtHn.J.A.(Worc.
Chance, Frederick William
Channing, Sir Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Coats,SirT.Glen (Renfrew, W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.

Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Cox, Harold
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Craik, Sir Henry
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crombie, John William
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan)
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dickinson, W.H.(St.Pancras,N.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Duncan,Robert(Lanark,Govan)
Dunn, A. (Edward Camborne)
Dunne,Major E.Martin(Walsall
Edwards, Sir Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Esslemont, George Birnie
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, George Denison (York)
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Fletcher, J. S.
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Freeman-Thomas, Freeman
Fuller, John Michael F.
Gardner,Col.Alan (Hereford,S.
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.Herbert John
Glendinning, R. G.
Gordon, J.
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Hart-Davies, T.
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hedges, A. Paget
Helmsley, Viscount
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Holland, Sir William Henry
Idris, T. H. W.
Jackson, R. S.
Jacoby, Sir James Alfred
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones,Sir D.Brynmor(Swansea)
Jones,William(Carnarvonshire)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Laidlaw, Robert
Lambert, George
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lamont, Norman
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire,Wirral)
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lockwood, Rt.Hn.Lt.-Col.A.R.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lough, Thomas
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Macdonald,J.M. (FalkirkB'ghs.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
M'Crae, George
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Micking, Major G.
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Menzies, Walter
Molteno, Percy Alport
Mond, A.
Montagu, E. S.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J.Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morrell, Philip
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Nicholls, George
Nicholson,CharlesN.(Doncaster
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Grady, J.
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parker,SirGilbert (Gravesend)
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pease,HerbertPike(Darlington)
Philipps,Col. Ivor(S'thampton)
Philipps,J. Wynford(Pembroke
Pollard, Dr.
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh,Central)
Price,Robert John (Norfolk,E.)
Pullar, Sir Robert
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Rees, J. D.
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roberts, S. (Sheffield,Ecclesall)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E.(Dundee)
Robertson,SirG.Scott(Bradford
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Ronaldshay, Earl of
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheffield,SirBerkeleyGeorge D.
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant,SirEdward Salisbury
Thomas, SirA. (Glamorgan, E.)
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Verney, F. W.
Walton, Sir John L. (Leeds, S.)
Ward,WDudley(Southampton)
Waring, Walter
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason,Rt.Hn.E.(Clackmannan
Wason,John Cathcart(Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, Henry A.
Weir, James Galloway
Whitbread, Howard
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Williamson, A.
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson,A.Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. W.(Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C.B. Stuart-
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. Herbert Lewis.

MR. BRIDGEMAN (Shropshire, Oswestry) said that on behalf of his hon. friend the Member for Central Hull he desired to move the Amendment standing in his name, to substitute "four pence" for "five pence." They had been told that this was the most prosperous year the country had ever known in trade. If that was so, why did the Government not take advantage of it to reduce this duty still further? The principle followed by Chancellors of the Exchequer in the past had been to reduce concurrently, whenever it was possible, direct and indirect taxation, but this year that maxim had not been followed out, the reductions which had been made having affected direct taxation. At the general election hon. Members opposite directed their remarks to proving that indirect taxation was too high and bore so heavily upon the working classes that they would spare no effort to reduce it. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had also stated that some day he hoped to be able to reduce the tea duty. Upon what did he base those hopes? As hon. Members were aware, the right hon. Gentleman had pledged himself to a scheme of old-age pensions, the cost of which would be very high. Under those circumstances how could he reasonably hope to reduce the tea duty in the future? The right hon. Gentleman took credit for reducing the tea-duty last year, but the effect of that reduction had not been to benefit the consumer.

MR. ASQUITH dissented.

MR. BRIDGEMAN said the right hon. Gentleman stated that if he had not reduced the tea-duty last year by 1d., tea would have been more expensive than it was now. In his opinion only the tea dealers and not the consumers had benefited by that reduction. The same argument applied to the repeal of the coal tax, from which the consumers had not benefited at all.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck): Those who get the coal have benefited.

MR. BRIDGEMAN said he was speaking of the benefit to the general public. Were hon. Members opposite prepared to get up and argue that the direct taxpayers were the greatest sufferers, and that they were the people who most needed relief? It was the duty of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to relieve those who needed it the most, but instead of doing this he had selected the middle-class income-taxpayers. He did not think it could be contended that the middle classes were the people who suffered most under the present system of taxation. It was only sound finance that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should balance the burden as equally as possible between the direct and the indirect taxpayers. He begged to move.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 21, to leave out the word 'five,' and insert the word 'four.'"—(*Mr. Bridgeman.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'five' stand part of the clause."

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said there was no difference of opinion as to the object which the Mover of the Amendment had in view. He would like to see the tea duty reduced to 4d., and even abolished altogether. But it was a question of time, opportunity and money, and in the present condition of the national finances the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not in a position to find that £1,000,000 which would be involved in the proposed reduction. The hon. Member opposite said that his right hon. friend had given a reduction in the case of direct taxation which he had not given in an equal proportion to indirect taxation. Surely that was not so in regard to this year's Budget. They were all agreed that reductions ought to be fairly divided between direct and indirect taxation, and, if anything, more in favour of the latter. But it was not a fact that direct taxation was to be reduced this year. It was true that by a readjustment of the income-tax relief would be given to some payers of income-tax, but it was counterbalanced by an increase in the tax upon another class of income-tax payers. These who suffered most from the burden of taxation were those who were going to be relieved. The relief proposed by the Mover of the Amendment would probably not go to the full extent to the consumer. The object of a reduction of indirect taxation ought to be that nearly the whole of it should go directly to the consumer, and they did not desire to give a reduction of indirect taxation which would only benefit the trader and the retailer, and not the consumer. That was the primary view the Chancellor of the Exchequer must keep in mind. The present condition of the tea market was singular, for the tea duty had been jumping up and down for the last few years, very much to the detriment of the tea trade, and the position of the tea consumer as well. It was raised from 4d. to 6d. and from 6d. to 8d. It was next reduced to 6d. and last year it was reduced to 5d. They desired now that the tea trade should have a rest, because its present condition was very peculiar. There had recently been great fluctuations in the price of tea, and a great demand, and under the circumstances experts were of the opinion that a reduction of one penny would be, to a certain extent, wasted. He understood that there had been a great fluctuation in the price of tea for the past few months and a reduction of a penny at the present moment would not be expedient from the consumers' point of view. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his Budget speech, explained the financial position of the country, and stated what they on that side of the House desired to do. They were still in favour of what was called the "free breakfast table," which meant the extinction of the duties on tea and sugar, but unfortunately reductions and remissions of taxation cost money to the Exchequer. The hon. Gentleman opposite wanted to know why a further reduction in the tea duty was not made this year. The answer was very simple. When the present Government came into office they found that the peace expenditure of the country had been raised by something like £35,000,000, and that was sufficient to cripple the power and the opportunity for dealing with this matter in the way they desired. While they wanted to carry out the policy of the free breakfast table, they were also strongly opposed to the policy which hon. Members opposite desired, namely, the taxation of the dinner table. They did not desire to place taxation on other articles of consumption. The Government were bound under present circumstances to resist this particular Amendment as the revenue involved was not forthcoming from other quarters.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend) said the speech of the right hon. Gentleman was illuminating in that he had shown conclusively that the resources of the Chancellor of the Exchequer for reducing taxation were very limited. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, like his predecessors, had found that with the present basis of taxation he could do very little at once, and he had asked for time. That was very plausible, but when Liberals were in Opposition and criticising the previous Government, they were not willing to give time at all; they wanted things done at once. The right hon. Gentleman had pointed out to the Committee, in opposing the Amendment, that the consumers would not get the whole value of the reduction because of the fluctuations in price.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Not immediately.

SIR GILBERT PARKER said it was a poor rule that would not work both ways. Hon. Members on that side of the House urged in connection with another question that a shilling tax would not fall with its full weight upon the consumers when fluctuations occurred, but they were told that they were wrong. Now the right hon. Gentleman used exactly the same argument in support of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said he referred to special fluctuations which affected the price.

SIR GILBERT PARKER said that the right hon. Gentleman, when speaking of fluctuations, gave no information as to their extent. He made an *ex cathedra* statement, expecting the Committee to accept his argument. The right hon. Gentleman and his friends had continually said that tea was practically an article of food of the people. The whole production of tea in the world amounted to 615,000,000 lbs., and of that England took 255,000,000 lbs., or 42 per cent. of the whole. This country stood second as a tea consumer. Australia consumed 8 lbs. per head of the population. Holland consumed tea at the rate of 1½ lbs. per head of the population, Russia 1¼ lbs., and the United States 1 lb. It was a remarkable fact that in all the countries which consumed tea to any extent proportionate to the amount consumed in this country there was practically no duty on the article; that was to say, they regarded it as a necessity of life, and made the tax as light as possible. In Belgium there was no duty on tea, and in Holland it was 2½d. per lb. Holland stood next to Great Britain and the Colonies as the chief consumer of tea. Russia came next to Holland, and there the tax was 2¾d. per lb. The United States, which was next in order as a consumer, admitted tea free. In this country we were going on the basis that the more tea was consumed the more it should be taxed. He believed that to be a thoroughly unsound policy. In all the high Protectionist countries of the world where protective duties were imposed on manufactured goods, the tea duties were only 50, 30, or 20 per cent. of what was levied in this country. In France, where coffee was chiefly consumed, the duty on tea was from 9¾d. to 11d. In Germany, where tea was used much less than coffee, the duty on tea was 5½d. per lb. Wherever tea was considered a luxury the tax was high, and where it was considered a necessity it was low. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was, he said, hampered by restrictions which were placed upon it—he presumed the right hon. Gentleman meant restrictions in connection with our present fiscal system—and that he could not give relief in this particular direction. The right hon. Gentleman found it difficult to do what he wanted to do on account of financial considerations. If he and his friends had been true to the principles laid down when they went to the country at the general election there would have been greater relief for the poor than had been given by the Budget this year. The Government did not want to tax meat, corn, and butter. Was it to be assumed that future Budgets were to be of the same kind as that presented this year, and that there was to be no broadening of the basis of taxation? He supposed the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be driven to put up the income-tax in order to give relief to the consumers of tea, and then when the great middle class, who paid income-tax so heavily, complained, he would give them relief by again increasing the tax on tea. If the right hon. Gentleman was only going to ring the changes in that way, the policy would not be satisfactory to the consumers of tea.

Mr. SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe) said the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been rather unfortunate in his method of dealing with the tea duty. When the right hon. Gentleman proposed a reduction of a penny last year he himself did not think that the small consumers would receive any benefit. He did not think the consumers who bought in small quantities had received any benefit. It had been said that the quality had improved, but he defied any hon. Member to show that more cups of tea per quarter of a pound packet were obtained now than before. The millions of people who earned small wages bought their tea in quarter-pound packets, and he was not aware that there had been any reduction in the price of those packets. He said last year that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have been well advised to have kept the tax at 6d. until he could make a reduction of 2d. He believed that the price of tea went up or down mostly by taxation. They never saw any change in the price except when the tax went up or down. He believed the proposed reduction of the tax by 1d. was needed to give the consumers the benefit of the 1d. which was taken off last year. Personally he would not support the Amendment if he did not think that it would decrease the taxation of the poor. He would have supported an Amendment of the Finance Bill which would have kept up the present income-tax, leaving the extension of the death duties as proposed by the right hon. Gentleman. The people who were suffering most would get the benefit of this reduction of 1d.; and the income tax-payers did not need to grumble. [Dissent from the Opposition Benches.] If hon. Gentlemen who dissented would only get in contact with the men who were earning 20s. or 25s. a week they would not want to increase the burdens on the poor. A man with an income of £3 a week did not know what these hardships were, and he would never get to the workhouse unless he was careless.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND said he should support the Amendment. His only regret was that the Amendment was not to make a greater reduction than 1d. He would have preferred to support the next Amendment, which proposed a reduction of 2d. The tea tax was one which bore heavily on the poor, and specially on the poor of Ireland. He had the greatest sympathy with the Member for Clitheroe when he spoke of the poor people in certain districts of England who with only 20s. or 25s. a week had to pay that tax. Yet the tax hit more hardly the people of Ireland whose incomes were £10, £15, or £20 per annum, and who had to pay out of that income a quarter of it and sometimes more in tea duty. The hon. Gentleman who moved the last Amendment made sympathetic reference to Ireland, and alluded to the evidence given on this point by a distinguished ecclesiastic in Ireland before the Royal Commission. If the House would allow him he would quote from what his reverence said on that occasion. The expenditure was given of "a fairly well-to-do family in Ireland"—let them mark the words "fairly well-to-do"—whose income was a little over £20 a year, out of which

£5 17s. was spent on tea. When they had talked about the tax falling heavily on the poor it had a special significance for them. More white bread and more tea were now consumed, and less meat. Irish farmers rated at £10 a year were almost entirely vegetarian. Those at £4 a year had no kind of meat excepting perhaps two or three times a year. A substantial portion of their food was composed of potatoes. Their main food was Indian meal. Sometimes the poor people had milk for their "stir-about," and it was this want of milk which had a great deal to do with the use of tea, so that tea had now become a necessity of life. Tea was truly a necessity of life, as it enabled the toiler to go back to his task, and the hardship it was for these people, out of their miserable little incomes of £20 a year—the fairly well-to-do—to pay this tea tax could be imagined. They were paying a quarter of their income on tea, a necessary article of food to them. There was another consideration which made the tax very hard. The tendency had been to reduce the indirect taxation and bring it about on the level of direct taxation. But in Ireland there had been nothing of that kind. The Chancellor of the Exchequer or the Secretary to the Treasury in answer to a question the other day produced figures for a number of years past, showing that something like 78 per cent. of the whole taxation of Ireland was on the poor people, while in this country indirect and direct taxation were equal. The Irish felt that under the circumstances it was deplorable that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been unable to do or to hold out any hope of doing anything for Ireland. A few years ago, as the House was aware, a Royal Commission sat to inquire into the financial relations between Ireland and the rest of the United Kingdom; there was a British majority on that Commission, and it found that Ireland was overtaxed by £2,750,000 per annum. The taxation had increased since then every year. The people felt keenly that no effort was made by successive Governments to meet the harshness of the taxation on the people of Ireland. He entered this protest, therefore, against the reduction of the income-tax while leaving the tea and sugar duties on the poor cottier of Ireland. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would do something to mitigate this hardship which, great though it was in England, was ten times greater as applied to the poor of Ireland.

MR. ASQUITH said that there was a great deal in what the hon. and learned Gentleman said, and he entirely sympathised with him. He did not think he had ever shown any insensibility to the financial necessities of Ireland. When they came to analyse them they were comparatively greater than the necessities of even the poorest parts of the United Kingdom. That was a real Irish grievance. It did not depend on any assumption of separate entities, and a comparison of the relation between them. It meant that there was a relatively poor population in Ireland, and under the system of taxation—which, although the balance between direct and indirect taxation during the last thirty years had been enormously shifted from indirect to direct taxation—[AN HON. MEMBER, "Not in Ireland."] He thought it was in Ireland also. Owing to the prevalence of poverty in that country the people of Ireland had suffered far more severely than the great bulk of the population of the more fortunate parts of the United Kingdom. He could assure the hon. Member for Clitheroe, whose speech he had listened to with interest, that nobody was more desirous than he to reduce the weight of indirect taxation. In regard to this particular duty on tea, a few years ago it reached 8d. per lb.; it was then reduced to 6d.; and last year by a 1d., so that in the course of three years there had been a very substantial reduction of the burden of the tea duty. Speaking for himself, after carefully examining all the facts, if he were asked what was the indirect tax which was most felt by the bulk of the poorer cottagers of the country, he would say it was not the tea but the sugar duty; he would not hesitate between the two. He thought that the present rate of taxation on sugar carried greater hardships than did the tea duty. Although tea had become part of the staple food of the people, it could hardly be classed as a necessity of life. It was near the line, but it did not reach so clearly the line of a necessity as sugar. After corn and bread, which they were asked by hon. Gentlemen opposite to tax in order to relieve the taxes on other commodities, he thought that sugar came nearer to the definition of an actual necessity of life than any other commodity of general consumption on which we had any kind of taxation. At a later stage, no doubt, an Amendment would be proposed asking him to get rid of the sugar duty or to reduce it, but he would have to reply that he could not afford to do it at the present moment. He, recognised, however, that when the financial situation admitted of it, sugar had the first claim of all taxes on commodities of general consumption to relief. As regarded tea it had always been a matter of dispute as to whether the reduction of the tea duty given last year had gone appreciably to the benefit of the consumer. He had had a great deal of evidence submitted to him that the benefit to the consumer had gone in the shape of increased quality. When he came to consider the question as to whether he might not this year go a step further and reduce the duty by another 1d., he was confronted with an almost unanimous body of opinion from experts concerned during the past twelve months that such a reduction could not be expected to benefit the consumer, because last year there had been a very remarkable change in the conditions of the trade. There was a record consumption of tea in this country last year. Side by side with that advance in the United Kingdom there had been a development in other quarters of an unexpected kind. In Russia there had been a heavily growing demand for tea, particularly of that kind in which the British Empire was interested. This unforeseen, and, to a large extent, unforeseeable, demand from foreign countries, together with an increased consumption here, had very considerably raised the wholesale price, and in the present condition of trade a further reduction in the duty this year would certainly not in any appreciable degree percolate, if he might use the word, to the consumer. It would be taken advantage of almost entirely by the middleman. Sooner or later the benefit of a reduction in the import duties on articles of general consumption would come down to the consumer; but when they were dealing with a duty which could be reconsidered at the end of twelve months, it was very material to consider what was the amount of reduction that would have to be made in order to give any appreciable benefit to the consumer, and, in his opinion, a reduction of a penny would not have that result. It had been said that the Government were leaning on the indirect taxpayer, but when they came to the discussion of the income-tax he hoped he would be able to show that that was not the case. They were making a readjustment as between different sections of direct taxpayers of the burden of the income-tax, which would make it a much more elastic and useful weapon of finance in the future. A reduction of the duty on tea from 5d. to 4d. would involve a loss of revenue amounting to over £1,000,000. He could not afford to incur that loss, which, without affecting the consumer, would dislocate the whole framework of the Budget. This Budget was not merely a provision for a particular year. It was intended to lay the foundation of and lead the way to larger changes in the future, which might include proposals for the relief of the indirect taxpayer. The notion had been sedulously propagated in some quarters without any foundation that he was seeking to stereotype indirect taxes, whether on tea, sugar, or other articles of consumption. That was totally remote from his intention. He hoped for years in which he might be able to deal with the matter. All he now wanted to impress on the Committee was that, if he asked them in the circumstances of the present year to maintain the tea duty at its present figure, at which he himself thought it ought not to be maintained for many years, it was for the reasons he had given—the condition of the particular trade at the moment and his desire to preserve the equilibrium between the different parts of the Budget and to have a free hand to make proposals next year which, he hoped, would meet with general approval.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said it was difficult to refuse one's sympathies to the right hon. Gentleman when he presented himself to them as a good man struggling with adversity. The right hon. Gentleman said he thought the tax was too high, but when he was asked to reduce it he replied that he was unable to do so on his present means, and that, in addition, another tax—the income-tax—called for reduction. The right hon. Gentleman said he was quite unable to make the reduction, but he consoled himself and tried to console the Committee under these circumstances by assuring them that, although he was not able now to make any reduction, he still cherished the hope that he would be able to do so before long. He, however, could not understand on what ground the right hon. Gentleman based, he would not say the hope, but the expectation which he entertained, because he had foreshadowed very large expenditure. A moment ago the Postmaster-General had explained that he and colleagues of his had voted for such a reduction as was now moved when they were in Opposition, but they were unable to give effect to that view now because expenditure had so largely increased. But surely the right hon. Gentleman and his friends must have been aware of that increasing expenditure when they voted for the reduction of the tea tax. [MR. BUXTON was understood to dissent.] Well, he had understood that the right hon. Gentleman voted for the reduction. But at all events the right hon. Gentleman, having had his attention drawn to the fact that some friends of his had voted for a decrease of the tea tax, seemed to think that they should now vote against such a reduction, because of the increase of expenditure. But hon. Gentlemen when they voted for the reduction must have known of the increase of expenditure which was then taking place, and they must have had in their minds some means of giving effect to their views when they came into power.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said that what he desired to lay before the Committee was that the expenditure of the late Government had made the reduction of indirect taxation much more difficult than it was before, and he pointed out that the present Government had reduced expenditure and reduced taxation.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he did not agree that the Government had reduced taxation, although they had reduced expenditure to a certain extent, and on certain items he thought they had reduced it to a dangerous extent, which he thought might lead to some costly disaster later on. He did not think the Chancellor of the Exchequer had ever pretended that he thought it would be possible to reduce expenditure and taxation to a substantial extent. In view of the right hon. Gentleman's promise with regard to old-age pensions it seemed to him that in spite of reductions which he feared they might live to regret the expenditure of the Government must go up. He could not understand on what the Chancellor of the Exchequer could base his expectation of making an absolute reduction. He believed, however, that it was possible to reduce taxation, and to arrange it with more fairness to the taxpayer and the country at large, and he should accordingly support the Amendment. There was only one thing which made him doubtful about giving that vote. He agreed that the trade in recent years had been very much disturbed about the lowering of the tax or the increase of the tax and there was a danger in making a further change after three successive years in which the tax had been altered. The right hon. Gentleman had tried to differentiate in regard to the urgency of a reduction between the tea tax and the sugar tax. He had made a similar effort before. On a previous occasion he defended his reduction of the sugar tax on the ground that sugar was the raw material for other industries and therefore, in that respect, it was unlike the tea duty. To-day his argument was based on the fact that the sugar tax pressed heavily upon poor people, but he (Mr. Chamberlain) did not think that there was any difference between the two taxes in that respect. In the case of Ireland, tea was a more important article in the household than sugar. An hon. Gentleman had referred to some of the Irish household budgets and the staple articles of food upon which some of the very poor in that country lived. He thought that they would find families at home whose budgets would very nearly equal those which had been brought forward. It was a very sad subject to deal with when one considered the dietary and sustenance of labourers and their families in some parts of England. Anyone who read a very interesting account published the other day by his right hon. friend the Member for Bordesley, in which he showed the articles of food of country production which were in common use in households in his youth, and which now one rarely saw, would see that the progress which had been made in England had not been so extended or so widely beneficial as they would all of them hope to see. Then the right hon. Gentleman had attempted to show that under present circumstances, if he reduced the tax by a penny, that reduction would not reach the consumer, and that was a subject for grave consideration. He agreed that it was extremely difficult to trace the effect of this taxation in connection with the price of the article, and it would always be difficult to ascertain it even when they had ascertained the facts as closely as possible. No crude statements such as were made on platforms at the last election would satisfy the Chancellor of the Exchequer when piloting a Budget through Committee. He thought the right hon. Gentleman did not express the whole truth. He thought the effect of the tax would be largely regulated by the state of the market at the time. The right hon. Gentleman admitted that so far as the present year was concerned, and had quoted it in his own support, but he made altogether an insufficient allowance for it in the ordinary course of trade. He was surprised to hear the hon. Member for Clitheroe say the price of tea did not vary except by the amount of the tax: the price of tea varied constantly on the markets, and sometimes very greatly, without the imposition of any new tax. If they took the rise to which the right hon. Gentleman had referred that day, it was such a rise as would, if it were in the form of a tax, immediately go to the pockets of the people. The effect of a rise following a tax was different from a rise from any other course. A little time ago when it was his duty to put the tax up to 8d., a figure far too high in his opinion, there was for the moment a great production. Over-production was stimulated because the planters hoped to make good the losses they had sustained before and they filled the market with a great deal of coarse tea. On the other hand he agreed with the hon. Member for Clitheroe that the people did not get the benefit of the penny taken off tea last year. The incidence of these duties was always an interesting study, but was still more interesting at this time, when many thought that preferential treatment should be given in these matters. If we admitted any large part of our supply either duty free or at a lower duty on a preferential basis, those who paid the higher tax would have to sacrifice part of it, unless they had the control of the market, in order to insure the sale of their goods. He would support the Amendment but not as an enemy of indirect taxation. Our system must combine both direct and indirect taxation, but he did not consider that our system of indirect taxation was well adjusted. Taxing a few articles as we did at a very high duty inevitably resulted in hardship on a particular portion of the population whose habits of life made them more subject to the tax than others living in other parts of the country in a different manner but upon the same income. That could only be regulated, not by abolishing the duties altogether, but by making them lower and spreading them over many articles. By that means they would obtain a larger proportion from the taxation of luxuries and a smaller from necessities. He believed that the system would be still more elastic and reliable from a revenue point of view and much fairer from the point of view of the consumers.

*MR. BELLOC (Salford, S.) said before the vote was taken he would like to express a view which he knew was shared by the constituency he represented. He admitted that there was a very strong argument in favour of the line taken by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The sum already allowed in relief was a large one, well over £1,000,000. It was a sum taken off a tax which had for some time been, and which seemed likely to be for some time to come, a foundational tax. The tea-tax had arguments in its favour as a whole. It was direct, sure, and at any given moment, from the point of view of purchase, minute. Then there was the strongest argument of all, that in matters of finance a Chancellor of the Exchequer could but follow the presumably honest advice of the experts who had advised him. This course had been advised by experts, and had been accepted by one who by the common consent of the House was as strong a Chancellor of the Exchequer as had sat in the House since the days of Mr. Gladstone. Nevertheless he would not be doing his duty if he did not support the Amendment. In the first place he not only gave a direct pledge in the matter, which was a most important thing, but at the time of the election he had gone into the figures carefully, consulted men in the trade, the managers of local co-operative societies, who assured him it was by twopences and not by pennies that the reduction was felt. Secondly, last year, when it was necessary for him to explain to his constituents that he did not support a similar proposal because of the recent advent of the Government to power, he further pledged himself to action in the present session, and he could not swallow his words. The third reason and the most important of all was the common knowledge that when one penny was taken off tea a considerable sum was put into the pockets of a few wholesale dealers and little relief reached the retail consumer. He was convinced that that was not the motive in which the Chancellor had acted, especially after listening to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, who stated that on the advice of his experts he believed a large proportion of the penny went into the pockets of the consumer. He thought, on the contrary, that a great deal of it went into a certain yacht—the Committee would recognise the name. He had no personal acquaintance with the trade, but he could call good witnesses; the hon. Member for Ashton-under-Lyne, for instance, had said as much in last year's debate. There was little doubt that to take a single penny off tea put a good deal into the pockets of the wholesale trade and little or nothing into that of the consumer. It was largely because these few fortunate persons had been greatly benfited and the rest of the community not, that he was compelled to support the Amendment. If this House was more representative than it could ever be under present conditions, and contained a larger proportion of those men who could witness personally to the effect of this tax on the poorer consumers, he was convinced that this Amendment would be passed.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) said that whether it was a fact or not that tea in this country was regarded as a luxury he did not know, but he could most positively declare that in Ireland it was a most necessary part of the diet of the people. Hardly a meal was taken in the cottage homes in his constituency at which tea did not form an important part of the meal. The people must take something. What were they to take? In this country he believed the working classes consumed a great deal of beer. He might be told that a certain amount of beer was consumed in Ireland, and no doubt that was true, but only of the towns. He was speaking of the large agricultural population; the small farmers and the agricultural labourers who lived in the country did not consume beer. They could not afford it. They could not, as formerly, use their milk, because they now made butter of it, which they sold to meet their rent and other engagements. As they could have neither beer nor milk, and could not be expected continually to drink cold water with their meals, what were they to take? In these circumstances tea had become an absolute necessity to them. For his part, he thought a great many of the Irish people drank too much tea, and in the preparation of it they did not follow the wisest possible course. However that might be, the fact remained that tea was a very essential and important article of diet among the poor of Ireland. It was not necessary to go beyond his own constituency. He knew perfectly well that in County Clare poor farmers and agricultural labourers would not know how to live at all if they had not their small quantity of tea, and it was one article of all others in regard to which they ought to get some relief of duty. It would be a great disappointment to everybody in Ireland, certainly in his own constituency, to learn that no relief was to be given. He remembered the wave of indignation which swept over Ireland when the duty was increased for the purposes of the war. It was really pathetic to see the poorest people, among them old women, going to the local grocer and finding that they had to pay what was to them a considerable increase in the price. When they asked why they were told that it was in order to carry on the war in South Africa. The only consolation given them was that, at any rate, when the war was over, and this tremendous expenditure at an end, the taxation would be decreased, and they would get relief. Now that the war was over, these poor people said that they were not getting that reduction of taxation which they had been led to expect. The Chancellor of the Exchequer might take it from him that he was not making a protest for the purpose of prolonging the debate, but simply for the purpose of stating what was a very real grievance among the poorest people of Ireland. He had expected that afternoon to see the Liberal

Benches crammed to suffocation by hon. Gentlemen representing the Party who supported the Government; he had thought that they would be there in their hundreds in order to show their enthusiasm in the cause of a free breakfast table. Instead of that, one or two speeches had been made, and, since he had come into the House one hon. Gentleman had told them in a straightforward way, though with something of an apologetic air, that he was going to keep his pledge to his constituents by voting for the Amendment. He did not want to say anything which might be considered in the slightest degree offensive, but it was astounding to him, something passing belief, that, when a suggestion was made for the reduction of the tea duty, a reduction upon an article of diet which was used by the poorest of the poor, there were hardly any Liberals present to advocate it, and probably they would see how many Liberals were prepared to vote for it. He could only say that these things really shook his confidence and belief in the genuineness of a great many declarations which were supposed to voice the true spirit of Liberalism. The tea duty was to remain as it was, and, as far as he understood, it was to be stereotyped and not to be reviewed each year as formerly.

MR. ASQUITH: Oh, yes, it is.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said he understood that by the provisions of the Bill some of the taxes were not to be reviewed each year.

MR. ASQUITH: Not the tea duty.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said he understood now that the tea duty was not to be included; he had been mistaken, and he was very glad to learn that the tea duty was not to be subjected to the arrangement. But he thought that there ought to be no such arrangement with regard to any duty. At any rate there was to be nothing taken off tea. They had all this talk about a free breakfast table, and when it came down to business the high duty was retained. Why not tax champagne and motor cars and a thousand other things besides, and not the tea of the poor people of this country and of Ireland? With all due respect, the retention of such heavy taxation was not carrying out the true spirit of Liberalism, nor did he think it was carrying out that spirit to create a large number of new Peers from the ranks of the Liberal Party. Let them come up to their professions. After their talk about excessive taxes on the food and the necessities of the people, let them vote in favour of removing this tax and giving some relief to those who most required it.

SIR J. RANDLES (Cumberland, Cockermouth) said the hon. Member was in the last Parliament, and he must have seen those benches filled by a protesting crowd of Members who earnestly voted against any increase of the tax on tea. At the same time they did so with considerable regret, owing to the well-known necessities of the case for the rise in taxation. But as the hon. Member for Salford had reminded the House, since then there had been a general election at which certain pledges were given, and apparently he was the only Member of the Party, who, in the last Parliament, were so loud in their denunciations of the tax, to get up in his place and say he intended to redeem his pledge. The Chancellor of the Exchequer in replying to the hon. and learned Member for Waterford had stated that he was in entire sympathy with Ireland. That was often the attitude of the Government, but their sympathy did not find its expression in any change of this particular tax. The tax on tea would be levied just the same, whether the consumer was in Ireland or in England, and would have its due weight and burden. What he wanted to point out was that not only the poor in Ireland, but a large number of the working classes in England, were compelled to take their meals at their place of employment. They were obliged to carry those familiar cans containing tea, which one saw so often, at any rate in the North of England, because of the necessities of their employment. They were compelled unless they took intoxicating liquors—a matter which many professed to deplore—to use this particular article of food. Factory girls, workers in iron and steel works, and coal miners all made use of tea. They were obliged to take it and use it as an article of food, and it was on that particular class referred to by the hon. Member for Clitheroe, the class who only bought a quarter of a pound at a time, upon whom they were putting a burden which everyone would agree pressed unduly on a particular class of consumer. Listening to the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Budget speech, he began to wonder whether the burden did fall on the consumer or not, because the right hon. Gentleman rather indicated that the consumer would not get the benefit of this particular reduction of one penny. He was inclined to think that the penny coupled with the reduction of last year would give to the consumer some substantial relief. If that was not the case, however, they were not fastened to the resources indicated by the Postmaster-General, who seemed to think that a tax on corn, meat, or butter would have to be substituted. The Chancellor of the Exchequer lightly threw away millions from the tax on coal. Did that fall on the consumer? If it did fall on the consumer, the country benefited by it. If it did not, then the matter was open to argument at any rate, with a view to relieving a heavily burdened section of the community on whom the incidence of this tax pressed most unfairly. There was every reason why the House should fulfil the pledges which so many Members had given and reduce the tax by a penny. That course would not be objectionable to many Members, because it would benefit in indirect fashion by an increased consumption a part of the Empire with which they were supposed to have great sympathy. They would do India and Ceylon no harm if they reduced the tax which bore heavily on their production. He should vote with the greatest pleasure for a reduction of the duty.

*MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs) said the hon. Member for Oswestry proposed to take another penny off tea, the hon. Member for Gravesend had taken advantage of this opportunity to deliver a little lecture upon the fiscal system, and the right hon. Member for Worcestershire had told him he must to be consistent vote for this reduction. It had been said that the supporters of the Anti-Tea Duty League were pledged to vote for a reduction of the tea duty. Although he had given no such pledge he associated himself entirely with hon. Gentlemen who had pledged themselves to bring about a reduction. The Opposition were offering by this Amendment something which they had not got to give. It should not be overlooked that it was the Party opposite who put this duty on. It was quite true that many of those sitting on the Ministerial side were pledged to bring about a reduction of the tea duty, and they were ready to take any action which would lead to that result, but what would be the effect of supporting this Amendment? It would be just the same as running their heads against a stone wall. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had taken a penny off, and he said that he had not sufficient money at his disposal to take off another penny. The argument that the reduction of the tea duty by a penny last year amounted to nothing was an extraordinary one, because if it did not bring about an actual reduction of price the consumer got the advantage by receiving a better tea. It was a great advantage to have better tea, because bad tea was exceedingly mischievous, whilst good tea was exceedingly beneficial. No man who had lived all his life amongst tea planters as he had done, and knew something about tea, would deny that it was a matter of the greatest importance that the public should have good tea, and if by reducing the duty they could give the public a better class of tea they were conferring upon the consumers a very great benefit indeed. He confessed that he was disappointed that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not been able to reduce the tea duty by 2d., and he entirely associated himself with those hon. Members who considered that tea was a necessity of life to the poor. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had, however, held out the strongest hopes that he would be able to take off another penny next year. Hon. Gentlemen opposite, however, were now offering pennies which they had not got in their pockets, and which their own Party when in power put on instead of taking off. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had told them, moreover, that this was not the proper psychological moment to make a reduction, because of the peculiar condition of the tea trade, and said that he knew of no time in the tea trade when the taking off of another penny would have less effect. While there were some grounds for this opinion, he could not but greatly regret that another penny was not taken off, and he resented the policy of putting sugar before tea in the list for relief. They must either accept or reject the Budget, and if they accepted it they must do so as a whole.

It would be impossible to introduce the change proposed by this Amendment without refusing to accept the Budget as a whole. He did not accept the argument put forward by the Postmaster-General that the tea trade wanted a rest. The middlemen might be satisfied with the present position, but the producer and the consumer were not and wanted further relief. What they wanted to do was to benefit the consumer. He was pleased to hear hon. Members refer to the tea planters; they were people who had suffered to the last degree by taxation, and by a spurious and faked-up agitation in Eastern Bengal, whence four-fifths of the tea came. The planters had not only suffered by currency legislation, but they had suffered all round. Notwithstanding this, there were no more loyal people, for they came forward during the war to help in the most handsome manner, and there was no class more deserving of the sympathy of the House.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Let them pay for it.

*MR. REES said they went out while the war was going on and paid their way; they helped the country and the country should help them.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: What has that got to do with the tea duty?

*MR. REES said it was only another proof that they deserved a reduction in taxation on tea, but he thought he was justified as one of the vice-presidents of the Anti-Tea Duty League in supporting the Chancellor of the Exchequer on this occasion and that hon. Members who had pledged themselves to take effective action to reduce the taxation on tea would be justified in declining to walk into this open trap and oppose a Minister who had done something and would do more, in order to support the Opposition which had piled penny after penny on tea.

SIR F. BANBURY said the hon. Member for Montgomery Boroughs had said he was in favour of taking effective action to secure a reduction of the tea duty, and yet he was going to vote against the Amendment. That was very extraordinary, and he did not think the Members of the League of which he was one of the vice-presidents would thank him for his "effective action." He had had the pleasure of listening to the hon. Member's speeches on several occasions, and he thought as a rule his remarks were very apposite, but he was amazed at the arguments he had used to try to extricate himself from the position of having to vote against his conscience and his pledges in order to support his Party. He was surprised that the hon. Member for East Clare had only just discovered that hon. Gentlemen opposite made statements on the platform which they did not carry out in that House. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had said that it was no use taking a penny off because it would not make any difference to the consumer, and the Postmaster-General had said the same thing. The latter's arguments on this point were so good that he had made a note of them to use the next time he addressed a Tariff Reform League meeting. He had always understood that fluctuations in the market meant that prices went up and down, but in the case of tea the price had gradually risen and that was not a fluctuation. That showed that these duties did not fall upon the consumer but upon the producer. The mover of the Amendment had said they ought to reduce indirect taxation at the same time as they reduced direct taxation. He wished to point out that last session the Chancellor of the Exchequer took some £2,000,000 off indirect taxation in the shape of the coal duties and £1,000,000 off the tea duty, but he had taken nothing off direct taxation since his Party returned to power. Now the right hon. Gentleman was taking £1,250,000 off direct taxation by reducing the income-tax, but he was putting more on by means of the death duties. As a matter of fact he was this year taking £500,000 off direct taxation whereas last year he took £3,000,000 off indirect taxation. He was afraid, however, that on this question he would have to vote with the Government again, because it was the lower middle-classes who felt taxation most, and they would be benefited by the reduction of the income-tax on earned incomes. It was after all necessary that revenue should be raised, and in view of the fact that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had already taken so much off indirect and not so much off direct taxation he would have much pleasure in supporting the Government on this point.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston) said the Chancellor of the Exchequer had rather implied that because there had been fluctuation in the market price of tea a reduction in the tax would not reach the consumer.

MR. ASQUITH said that these reductions ultimately reached the consumer, although sometimes there were arresting forces which prevented him from getting immediate advantage.

MR. HAROLD COX said he was glad that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had made that clear. But if it was made more difficult to reach the consumer, that did not in any way alter the fact that a duty might also injure the producer. With fluctuating prices it might happen that if a duty were imposed when price was high there might be a fall in price soon afterwards; but that did not mean that the duty did not fall on the consumer; the price would have fallen still lower but for the duty. Sooner or later the duty must tell, but so also must the relief from duty, and the sooner it was taken off the better for the consumer. Undoubtedly there were strong reasons against the tea duty, which fell with exceptional severity on poor consumers. He agreed with what was said by the hon. Member for Waterford that this was a duty which bore specially on the Irish people, and that that was a strong reason for abolishing it. But when they came to the practical question whether they could get rid of the duty at the present time, he thought they had to consider whether there were not other duties which should first be dealt with. He had given notice of a proposal to reduce the sugar duty and as he thought tea was a luxury as compared with sugar, and as the reduction could not be made on both articles, he should support the Chancellor of the Exchequer against the present Amendment.

MR. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield) expressed regret that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not seen his way to reduce the tea duty. Personally he intended to vote for the reduction. He was also going to support the hon. Member for Preston in regard to the sugar duty. Believing that tea was a necessary of life, he had always voted against its taxation. His hon. friend the Secretary to the Admiralty in an able speech last session dwelt at great length on the question of the tea duty, and pointed out that tea was as much a necessity of life as corn. It was absolutely necessary that the Liberal Party, if they were to be consistent, should vote for the total abolition of the tea duty. Tea and sugar being necessaries of life; there were other sources from which revenue should be derived. It was illogical for Liberals to tax the necessaries of life, and for that reason he would vote for the abolition of the tea tax. Hon. Members on the other side of the House favoured the putting of a shilling on corn. What difference was there between putting a shilling on corn and a penny on tea? They were both necessaries of life. There was one commodity on which the working classes spent about 8s. a week, and, although it would not be in order to discuss the matter now, he believed that the money so spent was absolutely wasted. The 1d. on tea was a war tax, and he thought the people were now entitled to have relief from it. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had no right to come down to the House and say, "I have been in office for eighteen months, and still I cannot give you relief in this matter." The excuse last year was that the estimates submitted to the House were those of the previous Government. Among the other sources from which revenue could be obtained were mining royalties and land values.

MR. LEVERTON HARRIS (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) said that one of the strange features of the debate was the fact that hon. and right hon. Members who were now opposing the Amendment almost to a man supported a similar Amendment when the Conservative Government was in power. The Amendment moved by the hon. Member for Barnstaple in 1905, when the Finance Bill was under discussion, was practically the same as that now before the Committee. They were told then that 4d. was the maximum amount of tax that tea could bear. It was argued that, the increase having been put on for war purposes, the amount of the duty should be reduced to the figure at which it stood from 1890 to 1900. The Amendment of the hon. Member for Barnstaple was supported by many hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, including the Postmaster-General, and in the division the present Prime Minister and 157 of his supporters voted in its favour. He admitted that there had been a change in circumstances, but he claimed that the change was entirely in favour of the reduction of the tea duty. The price of tea was higher to-day than it was last year, and that alone was some reason why relief should be given to the consumer. Hon. Gentlemen opposite who formerly said that tea was a necessity no longer said so. In their opinion it had now become a luxury. It was pointed out in 1905 that tea was largely consumed by the poorer class of citizens upon whose shoulders the burden of the taxation fell. At the general election speeches were made by hon. Gentlemen opposite to their constituents maintaining that tea was a necessity. He would quote only one speech. Before the general election the Lord Chancellor stated that the tea taxation was the most cruel of all taxes because it fell on the poorest of the poor. And last year the present Chancellor of the Exchequer told the House that tea was a prime necessity of life to the poor. Since then a strange change had come over the right hon. Gentlemen's opinion. He now said that tea was in no sense a necessity of life, but a luxury: and while this gigantic somersault was being performed the right hon. Gentleman had discovered that sugar was a prime necessity, so that the economics of the tea-cup had been frequently changed. When hon. Gentlemen were entertaining their friends on the Terrace they would have the advantage of knowing that the sugar which they put into the tea-cups was a real necessity of life but that the tea was not! They were told that tea was a luxury. Ninety per cent. of the tea imported into this country came from our Colonies, and if the tax was not to be reduced from 5d. to 4d. it would not only constitute a burden on the community but do an injury to our trade with the Colonies. In some cases the duty on tea amounted to 100 per cent. on the value of the tea, and when there was an increase in price it not only affected the poor but our colonial trade. The consumption of tea in this country was 6 lbs. per head, which would amount on each individual to between 2s. 6d. and 3s. per annum or 15s. for a family of six. They had been told that the proposed duty of 2s. per quarter on corn would be an unendurable burden on the working classes and drive thirteen millions who were now on the brink of starvation into the workhouse. But he would point out that the effect of a tax of 5d. per lb. on tea would be proportionally vastly in excess of the effect of a 2s. duty on corn, provided that the duty were paid by the consumers.

* Mr. DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN called the hon. Gentleman to order. He was discussing the question of a duty on corn. The question before the Committee was a duty on tea.

Mr. LEVERTON HARRIS said that if a 2s. duty per quarter on corn imposed a burden on the consumer, the present duty on tea imposed a far heavier burden on the people, and it was on these grounds that he supported the Amendment.

Mr. R. PEARCE (Staffordshire, Leek) said that it was a pity hon. Members spoke of tea as a necessity and the Chancellor of the Exchequer had carefully distinguished it as near the border line of necessity. Really it was the luxury of the poor. Indirect taxation was mainly on drinks and smokes. And the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his Budget had created three classes of taxpayers. There was the millionaire class who paid 1s. in the £, the middle class who paid 9d. in the £, and those who were not compelled to pay at all, but were voluntary contributors to the revenue, because not one of them was compelled to buy tea or the other subjects of indirect taxation save from motives of taste and patriotism. There was therefore no hardship in keeping the tax on tea at 5d., having regard to the necessities of the revenue of the nation.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 195; Noes, 136. (Division List No. 256.)

AYES.

Adkins, W. Ryland D.
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Sir John E. (Somerset)

Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barry, Redmond J.(Tyrone,N.)
Beale, W. P.
Beck, A. Cecil
Bennett, E. N.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell,SirJ.H.(Essex,Romford
Billson, Sir Alfred
Boulton, A. C. F.
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J.F.L.(Lancs., Leigh)
Bryce, J. Annan
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt.Hn. SydneyCharles
Cairns, Thomas
Cameron, Robert
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton,Rt.Hn.RichardKnight
Chance, Frederick William
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cleland, J. W.
Coats,SirT.Glen (Renfrew, W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins,SirWm.J.(S.Pancras,W.
Corbett,C.H.(Sussex,E.Grinst'd
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cox, Harold
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Crombie, John William
Davies, M.Vaughan- (Cardigan)
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Duckworth, James
Dunne,Major E.Martin(Walsall
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Sir Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Essex, R. W.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Ferens, T. R.
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Freeman-Thomas, Freeman
Fuller, John Michael F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gladstone, Rt.Hn.HerbertJohn
Glendinning, R. G.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Grey, Rt. Hon.Sir Edward
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon,RtHn.Sir W.Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Hart-Davies, T.
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hedges, A. Paget
Henderson,J.M. (Aberdeen,W.)
Herbert,Col. Sir Ivor (Mon.,S.)
Hobart, Sir Robert
Holland, Sir William Henry
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hyde, Clarendon
Idris, T. H. W.
Jones,SirD.Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones,William(Carnarvonshire)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Laidlaw, Robert
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A.Levy(Essex, Harwich)
Lever,W.H. (Cheshire,Wirral)
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald,J.M. (Falkirk Bg'hs
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Micking, Major G.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Marnham, F. J.
Massie, J.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alport
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Nicholson,CharlesN.(Doncaster
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
Partington, Oswald
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearson,W.H.M. (Suffolk, Eye)
Philipps,Col. Ivor(S'thampton)
Philipps,J.Wynford (Pembroke
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pollard, Dr.
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh,Central)
Pullar, Sir Robert
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rees, J. D.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson,Rt.Hn. E. (Dundee)
Robertson,SirG. Scott(Bradf'rd
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Sir Edward(Salisbury
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.
Thomasson, Franklin
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Toulmin, George
Walton, Sir John L. (Leeds, S.)
Ward,W.Dudley(Southampton)
Waring, Walter
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason,Rt.Hn.E.(Clackmannan
Wason,John Cathcart(Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, Henry A.
Weir, James Galloway
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams,Llewelyn(Carmarthen
Williamson, A.
Wilson,Hon.C.H.W. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Abraham,William (Cork, N.E.)
Acland-Hood,Rt Hn.SirAlex.F.
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Ashley, W. W.
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt.Hon SirH.
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Baring,Capt.Hn.G.(Winchester
Barnes, G. N.
Beach,Hn. Michael HughHicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bell, Richard
Belloc, Hilaire Joseph Peter R.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Boland, John
Boyle, Sir Edward
Brace, William
Brodie, H. C.
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Burke, E. Haviland-
Byles, William Pollard
Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. H. M.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward H
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cavendish,Rt.Hon.Victor C.W.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-

Chamberlain,RtHn.J.A (Worc.
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Clough, William
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cowan, W. H.
Craig,Captain James(Down,E.)
Craik, Sir Henry
Dalrymple, Viscount
Dixon-Hartland,SirFred Dixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duncan,Robert (Lanark,Govan
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Faber, George Denison (York)
Faber, Capt. W. V. (Hants,W.)
Fell, Arthur
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Fletcher, J. S.
Flynn, James Christopher
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gill, A. H.
Gordon, J.
Gretton, John
Haddock, George R.
Halpin, J.
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hazleton, Richard
Helmsley, Viscount
Hervey,F.W.F.(BuryS. Edm'ds
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hodge, John
Hogan, Michael
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Jacoby, Sir James Alfred
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kenyon-Slaney,Rt.Hon.Col.W.
King,SirHenry Seymour(Hull)
Lardner, James Carrige Rushe
Law, Andrew Bonar (Dulwich)
Lockwood,Rt.Hn. Lt.-Col.A.R.
Long,Col.Charles W.(Evesham)
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Lundon, W.
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeigh,Charles (Donegal,E.)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, W.
Magnus, Sir Philip
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks, H. H. (Kent)
Masterman, C. F. G.
Meagher, Michael
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Mooney, J. J.
Morpeth, Viscount
Murnaghan, George
Nield, Herbert
Nolan, Joseph
O'Brien,Kendal (TipperaryMid
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parker, James (Halifax)
Pease,Herbert Pike(Darlington
Percy, Earl
Randles, Sir John Scurrah
Redmond,John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renton, Major Leslie
Roberts, S. (Sheffield,Ecclesall
Ronaldshay, Earl of
Shackleton, David James
Sheffield,SirBerkeleyGeorge D.
Smyth,Thomas F. (Leitrim, S.)
Stanley,Hon.Arthur(Ormskirk)
Starkey, John R.
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Turnour, Viscount
Valentia, Viscount
Walker,Col.W.H. (Lancashire)
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent)
Warde, Col. C. E. (Kent, Mid)
Wardle, George J.
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Bridgeman and Sir Gilbert Parker.

MR. FELL (Great Yarmouth) moved to insert the words, "Provided that tea which has been grown and manufactured in any English Colony or Dependency shall be charged only a duty per pound of 4d." The hon. Member said that the great bulk of the tea imported into this country came from India and Ceylon, and, therefore, if his proposal were adopted, a large amount of reduction of tea duty would be the result. He would try, in moving the Amendment, although it involved a preference to the Empire, to keep it separate from the subject of tariff reform, partly because that topic had been discussed on another Amendment, and partly because he thought his case was a good one without the considerations involved in the previous discussion. He would like to refer to the extraordinary change which had taken place with regard to the consumption of tea derived from our Dependencies and foreign countries such as China. Forty years ago nine-tenths of the tea consumed in this country came from China, although it was then grown in small quantities in Assam and in Ceylon. The bulk of our tea came from China, however, and the change which we had seen in the lifetime of the ordinary man was that, while nine-tenths of the tea was formerly grown in China, now nine-tenths of the tea consumed here was grown in India and Ceylon. The change which had taken place showed that, fluctuations of this kind having occurred in the past, they might possibly occur again. If that happened the money invested in the plantations in India and Ceylon would, of course, be jeopardised. He could not say where our tea would be imported from fifty years hence. Tea was being grown in Natal, in Uganda, and in Swaziland, and it might be grown in other countries than those in which it was produced at the present time. If that was the case the sale of the tea grown in India and Ceylon and our other great Dependencies, might be jeopardised. The tax of 5d. which was levied on all tea alike produced a revenue of between £6,000,000 and £7,000,000 a year, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer had told them that, however favourably disposed towards the reduction of the duty on tea he might be, he could not reduce it because he had not the revenue to do so. He could not help feeling, however, that since the introduction of the Budget something might have happened to induce him to change his opinion, because it would give him more money to carry out the reduction. It was suggested that the change might involve a reduction of duty of £1,000,000, but under the reduced duty a much larger revenue might be produced. That frequently happened in the days of Mr. Gladstone. Supposing the change would involve a loss of £800,000. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had since his Budget saved some £600,000 in regard to the Irish Council Bill.

MR. ASQUITH said that not a penny of that £600,000 would have fallen in his financial year.

MR. FELL said the right hon. Gentleman would have the benefit of it next year at all events. He was sure, however, there was plenty of money. £100,000 under the English Allotment Act would be paid into the Bank of England, and there would be £100,000 under the Scottish allotment scheme, and if these various sums were taken into account, the right hon. Gentleman would have ample means to grant a reduction at any rate to India and Ceylon. That would give them some small token of the interest felt in them by this country. The question of China tea and India tea was the crux of the matter, because the tea we consumed came mainly from India, and the tea we used to consume came from China. He proposed that China tea should pay 5d. and India and Ceylon 4d. and he might point out that in the teashops China tea commanded a higher price than India tea. That showed that if the richer people wanted China tea they were prepared to pay for it, and that was the tea which he proposed should pay the higher duty. He did not wish to labour the point, but he could not conclude without pointing out that it would be a graceful act on the part of the Committee if it could in some way show our friends that we were looking after their interests in this way, and that the revenue was sufficient to stand the loss, if any, to the Empire. He also pointed out that when we ceased to import Russian sugar Russia retaliated by putting a surtax on Ceylon and Indian tea, but the consumption of those teas in Russia had trebled since the duty was imposed, which completely proved the fact that those who wished to drink these teas were willing to pay the extra duty. It might also show a possible change of taste, but his whole argument was that tastes might change and that times might not always continue as they were now. There might come a time when they might lose the markets they had so successfully gained, and he wanted to help them as much as he could to retain the markets which they had. He hoped that would be done by the Amendment he now moved.

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN said if the hon. Member looked at the Amendment which he proposed to move he would see that it referred to tea grown and manufactured in any "English" Colony or Dependency. There was no such thing as an "English" Colony or Dependency. He would therefore put the Amendment in a slightly amended form and substitute the word "British" for "English."

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 21, at the end to insert the words 'Provided that tea which has been grown and manufactured in any British Colony or Dependency shall be charged only a duty per pound of four pence.'"

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. ASQUITH said that even with the very proper change that the Deputy-Chairman had made this Amendment did not require a very lengthy answer from him. The hon. Member had cut away the ground from his feet by his concluding observations. The truth was that India and Ceylon and the other Dependencies which the hon. Gentleman desired to help had already ousted China tea from this and other markets. Nothing could be more startling than what had taken place, if they only went back fifteen years. Fifteen years ago the British Indies sent us tea to the amount of 101,000,000 lbs.; they now sent us 160,000,000. China sent us then 54,000,000, and now 5,000,000. So far from there being any necessity for any help for our fellow subjects in this matter, they had helped themselves to such an extent that they had not only captured our market, but the foreign markets as well, including that of Russia. So far as he could follow the arguments of the hon. Gentleman, this was a precautionary measure in case these gentlemen should be so different in the future from what they had been in the past that they lost the markets which they had captured. Before they accepted this proposition, which he quite recognised was not put forward on the ground he expected it to be, namely, the ground of Colonial preference, they should wait for the circumstance which the hon. Gentleman feared, to arise. He could not possibly accept the Amendment.

CAPTAIN CRAIG (Down, E.) thought the right hon. Gentleman had given a most cold and unsympathetic answer. The Amendment was an out-and-out preferential Amendment, and for that reason it appealed to him most strongly. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had a great opportunity by accepting the Amendment to tone down the impression of disappointment given with regard to Colonial preference in the recent Colonial Conference, and to show Britishers beyond the seas that we were looking after their interests as well as our own. He pressed upon the Committee the advantage it would be to give preference to the Colonies, and to supply tea at a cheaper rate to the poorer classes in Ireland. They had been constantly told, not only in the House but in the country, that the Radical Party were in favour of taking all taxes off the food of the people, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer had himself declared that the people would not stand taxation of food. He did not know whether tea was a luxury in England. In Ireland it was the staple drink of the poor people. He had hoped, when he saw the Chancellor of the Exchequer engaged upon his figures, that he was going to give way on this point. He thought that out of the enormous surplus he had in his hands the right hon. Gentleman might make this small and judicious relaxation of the burden of taxation on an article of the food of the people.

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS (Sheffield, Ecclesall) said he desired to support the hon. Member for Yarmouth. Since the Chancellor of the Exchequer made his Budget statement, the Conference of Colonial Premiers had been held in this country, and when the Government refused to consider the general principle of preference to the Colonies, a Resolution was passed unanimously, saying, "Show your sympathy for us and give us a preference on your present taxation. True, it will not afford us much relief, but it will show your sympathy towards us." The Amendment afforded an opportunity for the Government to show practical sympathy to our brothers and sisters beyond the seas by giving them this little preference. True, it would not give preference to our self-governing Colonies, but we did receive tea from British Possessions; we received it from India and Ceylon in very large quantities. Parliament should try to show the Colonies that they were anxious to take every step possible to draw them nearer to the Mother Country; and this, though a small step, would give the Chancellor of the Exchequer an opportunity to try and reassure those who had left our shores very disappointed.

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN said the question before the Committee did not affect the self-govering Colonies largely, and therefore it was of no use bringing them in.

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS said that a reduction would not at present give relief largely to the self-governing Colonies, but it would show that we were anxious to give preference to our brothers and sisters beyond the seas. Although this was no doubt only a small matter, as far as our Colonies were concerned, he urged the Chancellor of the Exchequer to take this opportunity of manifesting that sympathy which he was sure the right hon. Gentleman wished to show the Colonies.

SIR F. BANBURY said he had been in the unfortunate predicament of voting with the Government on each occasion that day, but he could not support them in this instance. Though he admitted that the Amendment would have the effect of altering the

Budget, yet he thought it would be a great step in the direction to which at any rate the Party on his side of the House were committed, that of promoting trade between the different parts of the Empire. He did not think they could find a better part of the Empire with which to commence than the great Dependency of India. His hon. friend who had moved the Amendment had stated that the Chancellor of the Exchequer must have money to spare, as he had some £600,000 which was no longer required for the Irish Council Bill. If the right hon. Gentleman had already appropriated that sum, as he was informed, then it could not have gone to the Irish Council. However, discussion of that would be out of order, and he would not pursue it. But undoubtedly the returns were going on well, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, by making a little shift in his Budget, could meet this particular point. It was a step in the direction which they all had at heart, and he believed the President of the Board of Trade was being rapidly converted to their views with respect to trade within the Empire [" No."] Certainly, the right hon. Gentleman was coming round. He would have much pleasure in voting for the Amendment.

*MR. CHARLES ROBERTS (Lincoln) said that once or twice in the course of the debate a suggestion had been made in favour of retaliating on Russia in response to the surtax on Indian tea. As a matter of fact, some high-priced varieties of tea from China came through Russia. Consequently as we might be differentiating against a Russian import, if this Amendment passed, he was in order in referring to this proposal for retaliation. His constituency happened to be seriously interested in the Russian trade in agricultural implements, and the effect of retaliation in respect of the surtax would be to seriously and directly injure the trade of his constituency. In fact, we could not retaliate against Russia unless we denounced the Treaty of Commerce with her, made in 1859, under which we agreed to avoid differential duties and all retaliatory duties in our intercourse with her.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: What would Russia do with regard to us? Does not Russia tax us very heavily.

*MR. CHARLES ROBERTS: That, surely, is not the point.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: It is the point, and very much the point.

*MR. CHARLES ROBERTS said that his point was that this treaty of commerce forbade any differential duties on either side. Now under that treaty we got most-favoured-nation privileges, including a reduction of 15 or 25 per cent. on some agricultural machinery. If the treaty were denounced those reductions would automatically cease, and the trade of his constituents in agricultural machinery would be crippled. The duties against us would rise by 15 or 25 per cent., and the German duties on similar articles would not rise, so that the immediate effect of the retaliation and differentiation, proposed by the Amendment, would be to cripple quite unexpectedly and unintentionally the trade in which we were competing with Germany, to the considerable damage of the constituency which he represented. He gave that as an illustration of the way in which retaliation and differentiation acted like a boomerang.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he presumed that, as the hon. Gentleman had been allowed to proceed, he would not be out of order in making some observations in reply, though he confessed that the remarks of the hon. Member were somewhat wide of the Amendment. It appeared to him that there were two observations to be made in reply to the speech of the hon. Gentleman. He thought the hon. Member was entirely misinformed as to the treaty in question, and also that he was under a misapprehension as to the effect of the most-favoured-nation treatment we received. He had yet to learn that we had any treaty with Russia that would prevent our treating any portion of the United Kingdom or our oversea dominions more favourably than a foreign nation. The hon. Member, if he looked, would find that the treaty did not exclude preferential treatment within the Empire; it would only prevent our giving less favoured treatment to Russia than to other foreign nations. What was the most-favoured-nation treatment which we received in Russia? It was the result of the tariff negotiations of other Powers. The concessions which they secured for themselves became ours by reason of our having the most-favoured-nation treatment. [An HON. MEMBER: Why not?] He knew of no reason why not, but he did not desire to argue it. Naturally, as those countries were concerned with their own trade, and not with ours, the concessions which they sought were those which would bring them the greatest advantage. If the Russian Government were able to point out to the foreign nation with which it was negotiating that the benefit of the concession they asked for would come to us instead of to that nation, that would be a reason for that nation's ceasing to demand that particular concession and seeking another. If, however, we reorganised our fiscal system in order to secure that power of negotiation for ourselves which all other nations possessed, and in order that we might no longer be dependent on the crumbs that fell from the table of other negotiators, but might be able to carve the joint for ourselves, there would then be no reason why we should suffer any more than any other nation. Why should we be less well off when we were able to protect ourselves than when we depended wholly on whatever concessions were got by the action and interaction of rival powers concerned in their own and not in our trade? He did not think the speech of the hon. Member had rendered great assistance to the cause which he represented. The Amendment gave the House the opportunity of differentiating between Indian and Ceylon teas, which were mainly consumed by the people, and China tea, which was the luxury of the few, thus reducing the taxes on food and at the same time rendering a real service to our great eastern Dependency. It was quite true that they had secured a position in our market. In the changes of the last quarter of a century there was nothing more remarkable than the capture of the British market by the Indian and Ceylon producers, and the consequent ousting of the China teas to such a conspicuous and overwhelming extent. He did not think that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would argue that if they reduced the duty on Indian tea they would not be conferring a benefit upon the producer of those teas as well as upon our own people. His own opinion was that they would. But apart from the material benefit they would confer by reducing this duty they would be responding to a sentiment which, in his opinion, they could not afford to neglect, which it would be unwise to neglect, and which, on the contrary, they ought to cultivate at every opportunity in their power. He should certainly support the Amendment which had been moved by his hon. friend. He wished to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer one other question. He thought the competition of the future, if there was to be competition, would probably come not from China, but from other places. While he was at the Exchequer his attention was drawn to the large and increasing importation of tea from Java. This tea was more akin in quality and flavour to Ceylon tea than was China tea, and he imagined that if there was keen competition in the future with Indian tea, it would come, not from China, but from Java. Perhaps the Chancellor of the Exchequer might have figures bearing upon that point.

MR. ASQUITH said the right hon. Gentleman had raised an interesting and important point. The return he had before him showed the teas imported in 1906 for home consumption were as follows:—British East India, 159,000,000lb.; Ceylon, 92,000,000lb.; making a total of 251,000,000lb. imported from countries within the British Empire. From China there were imported 5,600,000lb., and from other countries 13,200,000lb., the whole of which he thought he was substantially right in saying came from Java. The importation from Java was also steadily rising, for the tea imported from other countries in 1900 amounted to 6,000,000lb. and in 1903 to 11,000,000lb.

*MR. REES said he was very doubtful whether the acceptance of this Amendment would be any advantage to India. The real point was that China tea was imported mainly for the purpose of being blended with Ceylon tea, and he doubted very much whether any differentiation would be to the advantage of Indian tea. He was quite as anxious as hon. Gentlemen opposite that everything should be done for India and the Colonies, but he had his doubts as to the effect of this proposal. As for what the right hon. Gentleman had said about quality, he disputed altogether the statement that China tea was better than Indian and Ceylon tea. It had been said that Indian tea had more tannin in it, but he knew that the preparation of Indian tea was very much more satisfactory than that of China tea, and nobody who had seen both processes could have any doubt whatever on this point. The Indian and Ceylon manufacture was cleanly, efficient and up to date, no colouring matter was used, and the best machinery was available.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he did not say that China tea was better. What he stated was that it had a special taste and some people preferred it.

*MR. REES said the point had been made in the debate that China tea was a higher class article than Indian tea, which he altogether disputed. At the present moment Indian tea was gaining a hold upon the Russian market and it was ousting China tea therefrom. Sixteen years ago when he was living in Russia nobody would look at Indian tea, because they had made up their minds that there was no tea like China tea. That opinion was very much altered now in Russia, and what he wished to protest strongly against was the assumption that China tea was better than Indian tea. An hon. Member had said that only the higher class of China tea was sent into Russia. He might remind the hon. Member that Indian tea was now being imported into Russia in enormous quantities, and that knocked the bottom out of the argument from a preferential point of view and showed that the Russians had not been able to retaliate effectually on account of our action in respect of sugar. The Russians had never had any intention of keeping out Indian tea, but their idea was to develop its transit along the Siberian railway instead of by way of their western ports. Tea was an article which got seasick and spoiled by being too long in ships, and consequently when it was conveyed to Russia by the overland route it arrived there in the best possible condition.

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: We cannot have all these explanations. The Amendment is simply whether the duty should be fourpence or fivepence.

*MR. REES said he only followed other speakers and he doubted, for the reasons he had given, whether this proposal would be of any advantage to India.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.) hoped the Committee would not take the narrow, selfish view advanced by the Member for Lincoln that the interest of the Empire must be sacrificed to the interest of Lincoln's trade with Russia in agricultural implements. Instead of taking a narrow and selfish view he hoped the Government would look at the question from the wide and Imperial standpoint embodied in the Amendment. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had said that very little tea was now grown in our Colonies.

MR. ASQUITH: I did not say so.

MR. T. L. CORBETT said he was glad to hear that denial. The right hon. Gentleman did not always state facts [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh, oh!"] If this Amendment were carried it might lead to a great encouragement of the growth of tea in many of our Colonies which were quite adapted to its production. Instead of tariff reformers being charged with taking a narrow and selfish view of trade interests it had now been proved that the hon. Member for Lincoln was prepared to sacrifice Imperial interests in favour of the particular trade of his own constituency.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 53, Noes 217. (Division List No. 257.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood,RtHn.SirAlexF.
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Ashley, W. W.
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Boyle, Sir Edward
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. H. M.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Cave, George
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Chamberlain,RtHnJ.A.(Worc
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig,CaptainJames(Down,E.)
Craik, Sir Henry
Dalrymple, Viscount

Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duncan,Robert(Lanark, Govan
Fletcher, J. S.
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Gordon, J.
Haddock, George R.
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Helmsley, Viscount
Hervey,F.W.F.(BuryS.Edmd's
Houston, Robert Paterson
Kenyon-Slaney,Rt.Hon.Col.W.
Kimber, Sir Henry
King,SirHenrySeymour(Hull)
Law, Andrew Bonar (Dulwich)
Lockwood,Rt.Hn.Lt.-Col.A.R.
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Magnus, Sir Philip
Marks, H. H. (Kent)
Nicholson, Wm. G. (Petersfield)
Nield, Herbert
Pease,HerbertPike(Darlington)
Randles, Sir John Scurrah
Smith,F.E.(Liverpool,Walton)
Starkey, John R.
Thornton, Percy M.
Turnour, Viscount
Walker,Col.W.H.(Lancashire)
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson,A.Stanley(York,E.R.)
Wortley,Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Fell and Mr. Samuel Roberts.

NOES.

Abraham,William (Cork, N.E.)
Adkins, W. Ryland D.
Alden, Percy
Asquith,Rt.Hon.HerbertHenry
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker,JosephA.(Finsbury,E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring,Godfrey(Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnes, G. N.
Barry,RedmondJ.(Tyrone,N.)
Beale, W. P.
Beck, A. Cecil
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Bennett, E. N.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell,SirJ.H.(Essex,Romford
Billson, Sir Alfred
Boland, John
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner,J.F.L.(Lancs..Leigh)
Bryce, J. Annan
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton,Rt.Hn. SydneyCharles
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Cameron, Robert
Causton,Rt.Hn.RichardKnight
Cheetham, John Frederick
Clough, William
Coats,SirT.Glen(Renfrew, W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins,SirWm.J.(S.Pancras,W.
Corbett,C.H.(Sussex,E.Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cotton, Sir H, J. S.
Cox, Harold
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crombie, John William
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Duckworth, James
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Elibank, Master of
Essex, R. W.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ffrench, Peter
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, John Michael F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.HerbertJohn
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gurdon,RtHn.SirW.Brampton
Gwynn, Stephen Lucius
Halpin, J.
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey,W.E.(Derbyshire,N.E.)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazleton, Richard
Hedges, A. Paget
Henderson, J.M.(Aberdeen,W.)
Hodge, John
Hogan, Michael
Holland,Sir William Henry
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Hyde, Clarendon
Idris, T. H. W.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones,SirD.Brynmor(Swansea)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones,William(Carnarvonshire)
Jowett, F. W.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
Laidlaw, Robert
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Lardner, James Carrige Rushe
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A.Levy(Essex,Harwich)
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire,Wirral)
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Macdonald,J.M.(FalkirkB'ghs
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeigh,Charles (Donegal,E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Marnham, F. J.
Meagher, Michael
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alport
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murnaghan, George
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Nicholls, George
Nicholson,CharlesN.(Doncaster
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien,Kendal (TipperaryMid
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Grady, J,
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parker, James (Halifax)
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pearson,W.H.M.(Suffolk,Eye)
Philipps,J.Wynford (Pembroke
Pollard, Dr.
Price, C. E. (Edinburgh,Central
Pullar, Sir Robert
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Redmond,John E. (Waterford)
Rees, J. D.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel,HerbertL.(Cleveland)
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Shipman, Dr. John G.

Silcock, Thomas Ball
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smyth, Thomas F. (Leitrim, S.)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.)
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Thomasson, Franklin
Thompson, J. W. H. (Somerset, E.
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent)
Wardle, George J.
Waring, Walter
Wason, Rt. Hn. E. (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, Henry A.
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, Llewelyn Carmarthen
Williamson, A.
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

Question proposed, "That Clause 1 stand part of the Bill."

MR. FLETCHER (Hampstead) said there should be greater fairness shown to the Dependency of India in our system of taxation. We did not pay sufficient attention to the bearing of fiscal questions on our Indian fellow subjects. It was a great injustice that we should put so heavy a tax on tea, one of India's chief industries, and that India should be compelled to pay an excise duty on her cotton goods. This duty was a violation of free trade principles. He was of opinion that the proper policy for this country was to favour free trade in the real sense, that was to say, to have free exchange between the United Kingdom and India. If we admitted tea and tobacco free from India, and if India admitted cotton and woollen goods and cutlery free from this country, it would be the greatest step in favour of real free trade that had ever been taken. He strongly objected to the tea duty, and he had given a pledge to his constituents that he would vote against it. There were many hon. Members on the Ministerial side of the House who were pledged to vote against the tea and sugar duties, and he appealed to them to act accordingly. If they did not vote against those taxes, he earnestly hoped that their constituents would dispense with them at the next election.

Question put.

The Committee divided: Ayes, 184; Noes, 71. (Division List No. 258.)

AYES.

Adkins, W. Ryland D.
Alden, Percy
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barry, Redmond J. (Tyrone, N.)
Beale, W. P.
Beck, A. Cecil
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Bennett, E. N.
Bethell, Sir J. H. (Essex, Romf'rd
Billson, Sir Alfred
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Bryce, J. Annan
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Rt. Hn. Richard Knight
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew, W.)
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras, W
Corbett, C H (Sussex, E, Grinst'd)
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cox, Harold
Crombie, John William
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Duckworth, James
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Elibank, Master of
Essex, R. W.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, John Michael F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Glendinning, R. G.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Gurdon, Rt Hn. Sir W. Brampton
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, W. E. (Derbyshire, N.E.
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hedges, A. Paget
Henderson, J. M. (Aberdeen, W.)
Hodge, John

Holden, E. Hopkinson
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Hyde, Clarendon
Idris, T. H. W.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones,SirD.Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones,William(Carnarvonshire)
Kekewich, Sir George
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb,Edmund G.(Leominster)
Lamont, Norman
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever,A.Levy (Essex, Harwich)
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Macdonald,J.M.(FalkirkB'ghs)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Marnham, F. J.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alport
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Nicholls, George
Nicholson,CharlesN.(Doncast'r
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Parker, James (Halifax)
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pearson,W.H.M. (Suffolk,Eye)
Philipps,J.Wynford(Pembroke
Pollard, Dr.
Price, E. C. (Edinburgh,Central
Priestley, Arthur (Grantham)
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Rees, J. D.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roe,Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Shackleton, David James
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanley,Hn.A.Lyulph(Chesh.)
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas,SirA.(Glamorgan,E.)
Thomas,DavidAlfred(Merthyr
Thomasson, Franklin
Thompson,J.W.H.(Somers't,E.
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walton,SirJohnL.(Leeds,S.)
Ward,John (Stoke upon Trent)
Ward,W.Dudley(Southampton
Wardle, George J.
Waring, Walter
Wason,Rt.Hn.E.(Clackmannan
Wason,JohnCathcart(Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, Henry A.
White,J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williamson, A.
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson,P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Abraham,William(Cork, N.E.)
Acland-Hood,Rt Hn.SirAlex.F.
Ashley, W. W.
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barnes, G. N.
Beach,Hn.MichaelHughHicks
Boland, John
Boyle,Sir Edward
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Burke, E. Haviland-
Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. H. M.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Cave, George
Cecil,Lord John P. Joicey-
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig,CaptainJames (Down,E.)
Craik, Sir Henry
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duncan,Robert(Lanark,Govan
Fell, Arthur
Ffrench, Peter
Flynn,James Christopher
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Gill, A. H.
Glover, Thomas
Gordon, J.
Gwynn, Stephen Lucius
Haddock, George R.
Halpin, J.
Hazleton, Richard
Helmsley, Viscount
Hervey,F.W.F.(BuryS.Edm'ds
Hogan, Michael
Houston, Robert Paterson
Jowett, F. W.
Kimber. Sir Henry
King,SirHenrySeymour(Hull)
Lardner, James Carrige Rushe
Law, Andrew Bonar (Dulwich)
Lockwood,Rt.Hn.Lt.-Col.A.R.
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeigh,Charles (Donegal,E.)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Marks, H. H. (Kent)
Meagher, Michael
Mooney, J. J.
Murnaghan, George
Nield, Herbert
Nolan, Joseph
O'Brien,Kendal(Tipperary Mid
O'Connor, John (Kidlare, N.)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Grady, J.
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Pease,HerbertPike(Darlington
Randles, Sir John Scurrah
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Roberts,S.(Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Smith,F.E.(Liverpool,Walton)
Smyth,Thomas F. (Leitrim, S.)
Starkey, John R.
Thornton, Percy M.
Turnour, Viscount
Walker,Col.W.H.(Lancashire)
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Young, Samuel

Tellers for the Noes—Mr. Fletcher and Viscount Dalrymple.

And it being a quarter past Eight of the clock, and there being Private Business set down by direction of the Chairman of Ways and Means under Standing Order No. 8, further Proceeding was postponed without Question put.

KING EDWARD'S HOSPITAL FUND FOR LONDON BILL [LORDS] (BY ORDER).

Order for Consideration, as amended, read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill, as amended, be now considered."

DR. RUTHERFORD (Middlesex, Brentford) moved that this Bill be recommitted to the former Committee with an instruction to insert clauses to provide that the control and management of King Edward's Hospital Fund should be vested in the president and council, and that the council be constituted on representative lines. He said that his action was dictated by no hostility to the Fund started by His Majesty the King in 1897 in commemoration of Queen Victoria. By doing this, His Majesty had dug another deep well of affection and gratitude in the hearts of the medical profession and of the people of this country, especially of the sick poor. The Fund, owing to His Majesty's guidance, had been extremely beneficent, and had opened new sources of supply, and had tapped rich veins of support for the London hospitals which had been crippled in their finances. It was now the chief reservoir for feeding the funds for the support of the hospitals, and many persons who had previously given their subscriptions to particular hospitals now contributed to this Royal reservoir. The Hospital Sunday Fund in 1905 amounted to £75,000, the Hospital Saturday Fund to £24,000, while the King's Hospital Fund reached £111,000, so that the latter was the richest source of revenue for the hospitals of the Metropolis. Besides that, the King's Hospital Fund had now a capital of over £1,000,000. The promoters of this Bill could have done what they aimed at by Royal Charter, or by Incorporation by Act of Parliament. Clause 6 of the Bill enacted that—

> "The direction, control, and management of the affairs and property of the corporation shall, subject to the provisions of the Act, be vested in the president and general council; and the members of the general council shall from time to time be appointed by the president as he may think fit, so however that the number of councillors so far as may be practicable, shall not be less than twelve. All the councillors and members of committees constituted under this Act shall hold office until the end of the year in which they had been appointed, and may be re-appointed from year to year."

By Clause 7 the president—

> "may from time to time, by writing under his hand, constitute committees for the administration of the funds and property of the corporation, or for any of the purposes of this Act, and appoint the members thereof, and may delegate to any committee all or any of his powers under this Act . . ., which power if delegated to a committee of two persons shall be deemed to be sufficiently exercised by each of such persons signing an approval in writing of the Act approval thereof is required."

Further, the president—

> "may appoint and remove any treasurers, secretaries, auditors and other officers of the corporation and fix their remuneration, and he shall have power in his sole discretion to direct the distribution and allocation of the Funds."

It would be seen, therefore, that the president had full and complete power, unlimited, uncontrolled, and unchecked. Let them contrast this constitution with the constitution of the Patriotic Fund as established by the Act of 1903, and it would be found that that constitution was on very definite and representative lines. The constitution of the Patriotic Fund was to be found in the schedule of the Act. The corporation was to consist of twelve members nominated by His Majesty; the Lords-Lieutenant of counties; the chairman for the time being of every council of a county, or if that chairman was unable or unwilling to act the county council might appoint some other person in place of the chairman; of every person for the time being entitled to the style of Lord Mayor, and the Mayor for the time being of every county borough in England, Wales, and Ireland; of every person for the time being entitled to the style of Lord Provost, and the Provost for the time being of every Royal, Parliamentary, or Police Burgh in Scotland with a population of, or exceeding 50,000; and of any number of persons, not exceeding seven, whom the council of the corporation might think fit to co-opt as members, each of whom would be nominated as the representative of a charitable fund founded for the like purposes as the corporation. And the schedule went on to say that the executive committee should consist of not less than twelve nor more than twenty members of the corporation, of whom three should constitute a quorum. Four members in the first instance, and thereafter one member of the committee should be appointed by the Treasury, two by the First Lord of the Admiralty, two by the Secretary of State for War, and the remainder by the general council. According to the present constitution of the general council of King Edward's Hospital Fund, the principle of representation was well recognised indeed. The Church of England was represented by the Bishop of London and the Bishop of Southwark; the Roman Catholic Church by Archbishop Bourne; the Free Church Council by the Rev. Dr. J. Guinness Rogers; the Wesleyan Conference by the Rev. Dr. T. Bowman Stephenson; and the Jews by the Chief Rabbi, the Rev. Dr. Adler. Then there were the Presidents of the Hospital Sunday and the Hospital Saturday Funds, the Chairman of the London County Council, the Governor of the Bank of England, the President of the Royal College of Physicians, the President of the Royal College of Surgeons, and other gentlemen nominated. All that he and his friends asked for was that a representative council should be included in the present Bill which would meet public requirements, and its constitution could be put in a schedule to the Bill, as was done in the case of the Royal Patriotic Fund Corporation. That representative council might consist of so many members to be nominated by the president, and the remainder to be elected—one by the Corporation of the City of London, one by the London County Council, one by the London University, one by the Royal College of Physicians, one by the Royal College of Surgeons, two by the British Medical Association which represented 20,000 physicians and surgeons, 3,000 of whom practised in the metropolis, and who gave their services free to the hospitals; one by the Hospital Sunday Fund, one by the Hospital Saturday Fund, and one by the Central Hospital Council. He felt that it was not in the interest of the fund that the whole power should lie in the hands of the president, nor was it fair to the president himself, because it would place him in a false position, impose upon him great responsibility, and lay him open to criticism, some of it of a very unkindly character. The constitution of the corporation of the fund as provided for by the Bill was without precedent for a hundred years, and was contrary to the spirit of the times. The chief defence of the Bill was that the fund was a private one. It was true that in its initial stage it might have been a private fund, but now it had become a public fund for public purposes, and that was becoming more true every day. They had been told that Amendments had been offered by the promoters of the Bill, but these consisted only of an offer that the Prime Minister, the Lord Chancellor, and the Governor of the Bank of England should be allowed to nominate the president when it became essential. But it was no concession at all. In the opinion of a large section of the medical profession and those interested in the hospitals and their management, the president would be placed in an injudicious and unfortunate position. In the Committee on Unopposed Bills, the measure, received drastic censure on the part of certain Members. There was a Royal Commission sitting at the present time to inquire into the distress existing, the administration of the Poor Law, and the question of medical relief, and he thought that was a reason for delaying the further consideration of the Bill during its recommittal. They did not know what the recommendations of the Commission might be in the direction of municipal control. In foreign countries must of the hospitals were under municipal control and received State aid, and they did not know what the Commission might decide with reference to those points. He appealed to the Government not to make this a Government question by putting on the Government whips. They wished the future of the hospitals of London to be assured and in the interests of the hospitals and in the interests of the present promoters of the Bill he hoped they would see their way to accept his Amendment.

Dr. Rutherford.

*Mr. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland), in seconding the Amendment said that everyone in the House was very anxious that the Bill should be passed, as they realised the value of the fund. He considered, however, that it would be surprising if some of its provisions were passed without protest and comment by the present House of Commons. The main issue they were raising did not concern merely the present moment. What they challenged was that the Bill was to establish a constitution in perpetuity and create a governing body which was unchangeable, unless they resorted to the invidious proceeding of passing an Act of Parliament to supersede it, if its administration of the fund proved to be unpopular. The question therefore was not for the present but for the future; there had been no complaint of the administration of the fund in the past; on the contrary, there had been nothing but praise. The council had been chosen with discretion and the same discretion had been shown, in the opinion of everybody, in the disposal of the money. There had been universal testimony to the tact with which the administration had been conducted. But dealing with the future and with personalities of which they knew nothing he must point out that they were handing over in the next generation these enormous sums upon which the London hospitals would depend, to the entire and unfettered control of some person who might not have the qualities of the past or the present president, or, having the qualities, might not exercise them because he was not so deeply interested in these funds. He hoped the Government would consider the enormous public and not private interests which were involved in the large sums of money which the president and the council would have to administer. There was at the present moment the considerable amount of £100,000 being disposed of by the president and the council, and it was an increasing sum, because as the result of the rising popularity of the fund the number of the subscriptions given to the different hospitals had been diminished. If all the donations and legacies to hospitals were now going to this central fund, more and more the London hospitals would have to depend for their prosperity upon the administrators and distributors of it. The sums of £500 to £3,000 might be vital. It was a very serious, dangerous, and questionable power to give a council of this kind. What they would like to see in the Bill was some security for the continuance of the present wise administration of these hospitals; but in the system which it was proposed to set up the council might, if it pleased, dictate the policy of a hospital in return for money. There was a growing public opinion in favour of public management, and the time for large and uncertain charity in the judgment of some people had passed. The hon. Member for Brentford had mentioned the Royal College of Physicians, the Royal College of Surgeons, and the Medical Association as bodies which should be represented, but what he wished to see in the Bill was a constitution making the council representative, not only of the medical profession, but of public bodies also. The constitution should make the council representative of the medical profession by including the bodies he had mentioned and also the City Corporation, the London County Council, and in order to enable the views of those managing the hospitals to be heard he thought it would have have been a wise thing to have some representatives of the hospitals themselves in the persons of those who were on the Central Hospital Council. No doubt it would be pointed out that the hospitals themselves were *beneficiares* of the fund, but they should have some power of representation through the central council. He could not understand why it was so difficult for the advisers of the promoters of the Bill to accept a proposal of that kind, as he was practically suggesting to perpetuate a kind of composition of the council actually in existence hitherto. He merely wished to secure the basis of the right of representation for bodies hitherto honoured by invitation. In fact all the proposals would do was to stereotype and make obligatory on his successors what the wisdom of the first president had dictated. Nor would his proposal violate the ideas which were prevalent at the time of the foundation of the fund. In the original letter in regard to it these words occurred—

> "It may be desirable in the future to seek the assistance of representatives chosen by the hospitals; but for the first year we shall rely upon the co-operation of the Distribution Committee of the Hospital Sunday Fund."

For these reasons he supported his hon. friend's suggestion that the Bill should be sent back to the Committee in order that it might be strengthened by adding the representative element which would add to the popularity and usefulness of the fund. He believed that this would be the case if it was known not to depend in the future on the continuance of the great interest of one man. The proposal he made would insure the check of public opinion, and well-informed professional opinion, while it would not materially alter the management of the fund as it was conducted at present.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the words 'be,' to the end of the Question, and add the words 'recommitted to the former Committee.'"—(*Dr. Rutherford.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the question."

MR. JOWETT (Bradford, W.) said he supported the Amendment, not only for the reasons given by the proposer and seconder, but for other reasons of a far wider character than those already given. He respectfully objected to the fundamental principle upon which the Bill was drawn, and with all due respect to H.R.H. the Prince of Wales he could not agree that any one man should be placed in such a position of power as the provisions of this Bill would place him in. It seemed to him at any rate that on the other side of the House, if the professions which they heard from time to time were sincere, as he believed they were, one might expect a very large vote indeed in favour of the Amendment and against the principle upon which the measure was drawn. As had been said already by the two Members who had spoken, the fund was already a very important one and was likely as time went on to become more and more important. The mover went so far as to say that it would be the chief source from which the support of the London hospitals would be drawn in future. The fund would be made up of donations and subscriptions from members of all classes of society, and he was not satisfied even with the suggestion of the mover and seconder that the various medical organisations, the College of Physicians, the College of Surgeons, and the Medical Council, should have representation. That would not satisfy him, and he ventured most respectfully, feeling that on this matter he was entitled to speak for many others besides himself, to ask what appeared to him to be a most pertinent question, and it was, "Where do the people come in?" Nothing short of some form of representation would, he thought, satisfy the reasonable and just demands of those people who would subscribe in years to come to this fund. He objected to the suggestion that there should be this over-powering representation of the medical profession guiding and controlling these hospitals. He admitted that it was true, as the seconder of the Resolution had said, that to appoint these members of the medical profession would be only stereotyping what had been the practice under which the late president acted, but whether what was done was done by a single president, however exalted a personage he might be, or by the work of any committee he might select or selected by this House, he objected to the over-powering representation of the medical profession. In the past the public had to his mind serious ground for complaint against the medical profession for the way they had utilised public funds to support their own professional interests in education, and he thought it was true that between 1897 and 1903 no less than £40,000 of money subscribed by the public for the conduct of hospitals supposed to be maintained for the relief of the poor went to support medical students. If public support was needed for medical schools let that support be directly applied for. Under the present system all kinds of subsidiary interests connected with the medical profession were sought to be served. The fund was largely controlled by the medical profession without any real representation of the people. They all knew that prominent medical men sought assiduously for honorary posts in connection with our great hospitals, and under such a system there would be, with the committee largely composed of the medical profession, power to exclude any man. It had also been suggested, and he believed with truth, that the medical profession utilised these hospitals unfairly for the training of future members of the profession, and that surgical operations were conducted by men who would not be allowed to carry out such operations outside upon richer patients. All that had been said pointed to the necessity for representative control over this fund, and in the belief that the rejection of the Bill, or action antagonistic to the Bill, would emphasise the necessity, he supported the Amendment.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir JOHN WALTON, Leeds, S.) said there were one or two features connected with the constitution of the fund which he thought should be borne in mind by Members who criticised the provisions of the Bill. It should be recollected that the fund was in existence, and that it had been under the control of the president, to whom it was proposed to give power by legislation. There could be no doubt that the very great affection and regard of the people of this country for the Royal Family had created the fund at present at the disposal of those in whose hands it was placed for the benefit of the hospitals of the Metropolis. It might be said the Bill might have been avoided by the grant of a Royal charter to perpetuate a constitution which most commended itself to those who advised the Sovereign in regard to this matter, and that was for some time under consideration. But it was the wish of the highest persons interested in the proposal that the matter should be left to the consideration of Parliament, and it was intimated that any provision Parliament should think wise would be cordially accepted by those entrusted with the administration of the fund. Therefore the Bill passed through the other House and had been considered by a Committee of the House of Commons. There was a weakness in the Bill indicated and remedied in the House of Lords. No one had cavilled at the powers of the present president during the time he had been graciously disposed to discharge the duties of the office, but it was contemplated that on the resignation of the Prince of Wales of the position of president there might be a question in reference to his successor and the qualifications his successor might possess for the discharge of the duties and responsibilities legislation might cast upon him. That suggestion was put before the House of Lords' Committee, and a provision was introduced that on the termination of tenure of office by the present president the office should pass to his successor, to be chosen on the unanimous recommendation of the very prominent individuals who were named in the Bill. When the Prince of Wales resigned his post as president it would be necessary for the Lord Chancellor, the Prime Minister, and the Governor of the Bank of England for the time being to concur in the recommendation of some Member of the Royal Family whom they considered qualified to accept the post now occupied by the Prince of Wales, the member of the Royal Family being son, grandson, or brother to the Sovereign. Therefore, there was assurance that three persons holding high and responsible public positions would unite in recommending a qualified president; but if they did not concur, if they were unable to agree in their recommendation, then the duties of president would devolve into the hands of three persons; there would no longer be a president, but three governors. The public, therefore, had the guarantee of a unanimous recommendation with all the responsibility of the three high officials mentioned, or failing that there was the responsibility of the three persons who would fill the place occupied as president by the Prince of Wales. Then it was said the council should be elected; but the difficulty was to give the council an elective character, seeing that it was almost impossible to specify a constituency to carry out election. It had been suggested that it should largely consist of the medical profession, and, again, it had been suggested that subscribers to the fund should be the electorate, and if that was adopted he believed that the majority, and those who contributed the largest amounts, had no wish to interfere with the discretion of the Royal Family. If these were not to be the electorate, then was it to be the county council, or who? The fund had been in existence for ten years, and had been exceedingly successful; it had risen to a large amount, and its administration in the past was an indication of what it should be in the future. If reference was made to the names of the present council it would be found a representative council in the best sense of the term. It was clear there would be a large representative element on the council.

DR. RUTHERFORD: All we ask is that the representative element shall be actually inserted in the Bill.

SIR JOHN WALTON said he was trying to show that that was not necessary. If public confidence was to be secured and public support of the fund maintained, it was obvious that the counsels of prudence which had regulated the constitution of the council as it now stood would continue to regulate its constitution. If it was found that a large representative element was necessary for these purposes they might rest assured the representative element would be secured in future. It was exceedingly undesirable, however, to stereotype a scheme by means of a statute, because what a statute did could only be undone by statute. The hon. Gentleman behind him might rest assured that in hospital management there must be a large representation of the medical element, under whose counsel and guidance the spending of this money must be regulated. The hon. Member who had spoken on the other side regretted that they had put so much power into the hands of the committee; but some concessions had been made, and he thought the House would bear with him while he read the provision which had been inserted in the Bill, and which limited the individual power of the president, so that on his part, and on his own authority, the president could deal with neither the distribution, nor the investment, nor the application of the property; and that covered nearly the whole of the objects of the fund.

[The Attorney-General here read the clause.]

Therefore the objects were the collection of the fund, its investment, its application, its expenditure, and its distribution. The president was controlled by the majority of his council in all matters relating to the investment, expenditure, application, and distribution of money. His power of his own motion was limited to the mere collection of money. That came in Clause 6, as part of Sub-section 3. Let him point out what full appreciation this concession showed of the observations which had been made with regard to the provisions of the Bill. It was of importance that the name of the Royal Family should be connected with appeals made to the public for funds. It was absolutely that association which had made the fund and given it its great success. It was all important that this association should continue. Those who were anxious that no undue influence should be brought to bear on His Royal Highness with regard to the distribution of the money had the guarantee of this clause that in all such action he would not only have the council in association with him, but would be subject to the control of the majority. Subsection 3 made it plain that the Prince's control was subordinate in all those matters of account. Therefore on all those questions the Prince was subject to the control of the members of the council. Those who came to the council were there by the president's invitation, and they were men whose public position was a guarantee that they would not give advice that they could not wisely and properly give, and they would be responsible for any course they invited the president to adopt. The suggestions he had made in a report he was called on to make, and which had been adopted by the Committee, were to the best of his judgment, and in his honest opinion, a moderate proposal to carry out the scheme consistently with its original constitution, and he commended it to the adoption of the House.

*MR. G. GREENWOOD (Peterborough) said there was an Amendment on the Paper in his name in very similar terms to that of his hon. friend behind him, though from a paternal interest he somewhat preferred his own. It proposed that certain representative persons should be appointed as *ex-officio* members of the general council of the fund, which would really be left very much in its present position. He felt very strongly the force of what the Attorney-General had said. No one in the House or out of it would offer anything like unreasonable opposition to the Bill. One must remember the origin of the fund, its voluntary character, and the noble work which it had done. It would be not only unreasonable but it might be called ill-conditioned to offer factious opposition to a Bill of this sort. But he must say that he thought it was not unreasonable, when the promoters of the Bill came to the House of Commons and asked for very large powers to deal with very large funds, which they were told now amounted to a million of money, that they should take precautions, or at any rate make suggestions with a view to safeguarding the interests of the public in the future, and also of commanding its confidence, which was so essential to the fund. It was said sometimes, "After all, this is a voluntary fund," but it would not be a fund dependent on annual subscriptions. It now amounted to a million of money; there would be large investments, and the promoters asked for very large powers, as, for instance, to hold land without licence in mortmain. No doubt in the future, as had already been pointed out, the controllers of this fund would be able to dictate the policy of the hospitals and really control their management. What had fallen from the Attorney-General, he thought, really constituted the justification of those who had put down Amendments asking that the Bill should be recommitted, because there had now been made a most substantial concession which they all welcomed, and for which they were all most grateful to His Royal Highness the president. Of course it was for his hon. friend to consider whether this concession was sufficient. As had already been said, they had most entire confidence in the present management, but they were legislating for the future, and they did not know whether in the years to come this rich fund might not come under the management of a president who would not command the confidence of the nation as it was now commanded by the present president. Under this Bill the entire power was vested in the president. The members of the council were appointed by the president for a year only, and nothing would be more easy, at the end of such period, than to say that it was not desired to reappoint such and such a member. The president, therefore, had entire power in the constitution and election of the council, and he had entire power in appointing the secretary and treasurer, auditors, and other officers. If there was any difference of opinion, the president's determination was final; and, as the Bill originally stood, the president had control of the application not only of the funds but of the capital. He might have applied the money given to the hospitals to the medical schools, to which his hon. friend opposite had already called attention. That matter had already been inquired into by a Committee, who reported in very clear terms that the money subscribed to the hospitals ought not to be diverted to the medical schools. That was laid down very definitely in the report which he held in his hand. He agreed that it was a monstrous thing that public money subscribed for the sick in hospitals should be diverted to the medical schools, where practices went on which many of them disapproved of. They did not ask that the whole council should be representative, but only that some representation should be secured for the future, and he thought it was reasonable to ask that such representative men as the Lord Mayor and the Chairman of the County Council should be *ex-officio* members. He did not desire that the medical profession should have a preponderating influence in this matter. It had been suggested on behalf of the hospitals that certain bodies like the City Corporation, the County Council, the Metropolitan Asylums Board, and other similar bodies should be allowed to nominate members of the council, but that scheme had not been accepted. He was anxious that certain representative persons in whom the public had every confidence should be members of the council. He had put forward these views in the interests of the public, and he would support the Amendment of his hon. friend.

*SIR W. J. COLLINS (St. Pancras, W.) said there seemed to be a suspicion that there was a danger of this Fund being too largely controlled by the professional element. Even if that suspicion were true in regard to any of the London hospitals—and he doubted it—he could assure the House that with regard to the Fund and its Council it was quite untrue, because out of some thirty-nine members of the general council at most five or six belonged to the medical profession, and out of fifteen members on the executive committee only one belonged to that profession. Therefore there was no danger that the King's Fund would be unduly dominated by medical men. It had been stated that funds subscribed for the sick poor had been diverted to the medical schools; but it was at the instance of the King's Hospital Fund that a committee of inquiry was set up, and in adopting their report the executive committee laid down clearly the recommendation that henceforth no assistance should be given from the fund to such hospitals as used the subscriptions for the relief of the sick poor for maintaining medical schools. The hon. Member for Brentford had referred to the future of the London hospitals; but what of the past? Looking back to the year 1892, before the King's Hospital Fund came into existence, a committee under Lord Sandhurst was appointed to inquire into the condition of the London hospitals, and their report went to show that, apart from the three endowed hospitals, the general hospitals were maintained principally by legacies and large but uncertain donations, and the subscriptions from annual subscribers did not suffice to pay the servants employed, to say nothing of the cost of administration. That was in the year 1892. Since the King's Fund was inaugurated £750,000 had been collected and distributed by it for the benefit of London hospitals, and this had been done without injuring other funds such as the Hospital Saturday and the Hospital Sunday Funds, and other sources of revenue upon which the hospitals had previously relied. That £750,000 had been raised in addition to the ordinary revenue of the hospitals of London. He confessed that when he first saw the draft of the Bill in its original form he shared some of the misgivings of the mover of this Amendment, but he rejoiced to know that modifications had been made which vested in the president and the general council the direction, control, and management of the Fund, and that changes had also been introduced in regard to the power of nomination of any future president, and to the summary removal of members of the council, which existed in the original form of the Bill. He was also glad to hear from the Attorney-General the further concession he indicated that evening in regard to the distribution and investment of funds. The House would have heard with satisfaction the assurance of the Attorney-General that as in the past so in the future an *ex-officio* representative element would be found in the body controlling the fund. Out of thirty-nine members no fewer than fourteen were *ex-officio* members. He saw great difficulty in the way of securing representation of the various London hospitals upon the body which would distribute this money annually. If they were beneficiaries they were hardly bodies which ought to be represented on the fund. During the last ten years the Fund had added £750,000 to the resources of London hospitals, by introducing economies they had enabled sixteen hospitals to save £20,000 a year, they had facilitated the redistribution and the amalgamation of hospitals, and they had assisted the transfer of King's College Hospital to a more suitable site at Camberwell. The fund had been the means of opening 443 beds which were previously closed. After the assurances they had heard he doubted whether any further opposition was likely to be offered to this Bill. Last Wednesday, in the debate on the Prime Minister's Resolution, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said the veto of the Crown in matters of legislation had been obsolete for over 200 years. It was gratifying to know that the beneficial influence of the Royal Family was exerted in matters of voluntary administration like this, and he rejoiced to think that it had been through their personal agency that this large sum had been reaped in.

*Mr. MORTON (Sutherland) said everybody in London would be more satisfied when they could have some representative body to manage the whole of the London hospitals instead of their management being conducted in secret, as was the case at the present moment. Everyone was glad to recognise to the fullest extent the good work done by the King and the Prince of Wales in connection with this Hospital Fund for London; it must therefore be clear that nothing offensive was intended in discussing the provisions of this Bill. And the promoters had shown the importance of the matter by coming to Parliament for an Act to regulate the Fund instead of doing it by Royal Charter. The medical profession ought not to predominate on any of these bodies. He did not think that members of the medical profession ought to be nominated at all on any of these governing bodies; their business should be strictly confined to their medical duties. He happened to be the Governor of a hospital, and his experience of the duties of hospital governors was to say "ditto" to what the medical profession recommended. He hoped the Prime Minister would say whether it was possible to provide for the audit which was asked. He thought it was absolutely necessary if they were to retain the confidence of the public. The audit would give to the public the confidence which was necessary in the carrying out of the objects of this great Fund—confidence which the public had not got in connection with certain other institutions whose accounts were not audited in the way he desired in this case. He was most anxious to make the management of this Fund effectual in the best way, and to give all the assistance he possibly could.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): Though this is a private Bill, it is of such a character that I think it is only right I should say a few words about it. The speech of my hon. and learned friend has sufficiently explained to the House what the object of the Bill is. It must not be forgotten, although it seems sometimes to be forgotten, that this is really a fund created by the first president, the present King. It was he and his influence that obtained the money, it was to him that the money was given—money which would not have been obtained if it had not been given to him. And therefore he and those connected with him are not the least unreasonable, or going beyond their proper limits, in desiring to have at least some say in the management of this large sum of money. Then we have, as my hon. and learned friend has pointed out, the further fact that the Fund has been the most conspicuous success. It has done, as my hon. friend the Member for West St. Pancras testified, an immense amount of good in the improvement of methods, and also in the interests of economy. I believe, as a matter of fact, that the expenses of the fund during the ten years it has been in existence have only been at the rate of 1·35 per cent. It has been a model in the matter of management among all the infirmaries and hospitals throughout the Kingdom. That has to be remembered. Therefore it must have been well managed hitherto. Hitherto the members of the council have been selected so as to include a large number of public interests. Many Members of the House may not be aware that these are all members of the council—the Lords Lieutenant of London and Middlesex, the Bishops of London and Southwark, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster, the President of the National Council of Evangelical Free Churches, the Chief Rabbi, the Lord Mayor of London, the Chairman of the London County Council, the Governor of the Bank of England, the President of the Royal College of Physicians, and the President of the Royal College of Surgeons. These gentlemen have, no doubt, rendered good service, and they are an ample proof of the desire of the president and his august predecessor to take advantage of the counsel of persons so well qualified to give advice as these are. There is no reason whatever to doubt that the same practice will continue in the future. It has been said that these names ought to be inserted in the Bill. I can understand that desire, because it may be that this practice may be departed from, though I do not think it is at all likely that the president, whoever he may be, will wish to dissociate himself from the support he may obtain from having these names among his council. One of my hon. friends has said that we are legislating for the future, and that many things may be changed in the future. If the names were inserted in the Bill they might come to be held by those who would not be so much entitled to this position, and, on the other hand, if we followed this course, it would be difficult, without further legislation, to recognise any new body which might come into existence and would equally deserve to be acknowledged. That is how the matter stands at present. A further step has been announced to-day. The whole of the financial control of the fund was left, practically, by a subsection of Clause 7, in the hands of the president, but that is now put an end to, and the council has an equal voice with the president in all that concerns the investing, collecting, and distributing of the fund, and in the general treatment of the finances. That is a very large concession. I think it does away to a large extent with the necessity for the Motion in regard to something like representation being required. My hon. friend the Member for Sutherland has an Amendment with regard to the audit. The president entirely agrees that it would be desirable to have a public audit. The council, I believe, are satisfied with the audit at present, but to satisfy the not unreasonable feeling which my hon. friend has expressed, an Amendment will be moved to the following effect: "The accounts of the fund shall be annually audited by an auditor nominated by the President of the Local Government Board, the remuneration of such auditor to be fixed by the President of the Local Government Board and paid out of the Fund." I think the great concessions which have been made to meet the very reasonable criticisms which were made upon the Bill are of extreme importance and deserve to conciliate the support of some who have regarded it with some degree of suspicion. All who have had anything to do with the preparation and progress of the Bill will be glad to acknowledge the great willingness of the members of the Royal Family who have been concerned in the matter to meet the feeling and desire of the public. This was shown at the very first step by their adoption of procedure by Bill rather than by Royal Charter. That procedure testifies to their confidence in themselves, in the work they have done, and in the good sense of Parliament, which has its result in the discussion of this evening. This discussion can have no ffect, I hope, but to add to the popularity and success of the Fund and to the confidence of the public in its management.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): I hope the speech of the Prime Minister

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.

and the two Amendments which have been announced from the Treasury Bench will enable the House to come to a unanimous vote. I trust that the hon. Gentlemen who have thought it their duty to move Amendments from motives, I am sure, which were honourable, will not consider it necessary to press them. The mover of the Amendment now before the House seemed to think that there was a parallel between this Fund and the Patriotic Fund. There is no parallel at all. In the case of the Patriotic Fund, one of the reasons which made legislation necessary on more than one occasion was that funds subscribed for one purpose had, for reasons which I need not go into, to be diverted to another, an alteration which required Parliamentary sanction. We are now dealing with a Fund subscribed for a purpose which still remains, and will always remain, unless the public take over the hospitals altogether, one of the primary necessities, and the money was subscribed to the first president of the fund. That wholly differentiates this case from that of any fund so far as I know with which the House has ever meddled at all. The question is whether these powers are of a kind which Parliament ought to give having regard to the unique circumstances of this particular case. I submit that Parliament ought undoubtedly to do so. We have had criticism from two quite different quarters. The hon. Member for the Brentford division of Middlesex has expressed a desire to see the medical profession with large statutory powers of representation on this fund, but an hon. Gentleman below the gangway who supported the Amendment seemed to think nothing could possibly be worse for a fund devoted to hospital purposes than large representation of the medical profession.

Dr. RUTHERFORD: I only asked for a small representation of the medical profession in comparison with the number of the council.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Even that modest representation seems to be regarded as too great by the hon. Gentleman below the gangway. These funds have been largely contributed through confidence in the first president, and it is to the same confidence that we look for large contributions in the future. If there are hon. Gentlemen who think that a body framed on what is called a representative basis with *ex-officio* members representing various public bodies, learned and unlearned, or a body having direct democratic election, would be more successful in obtaining the confidence of the subscribing public, they have only to try the experiment. If representative bodies come into competition with this Fund and tap large sources of supply which are not now coming to this Fund, or any other fund, I am sure we all wish them every success. When the House is dealing with a living fund of this description, which exists for purposes of ever increasing importance and whose subscribers are largely in existence, I urge hon. Members not to interfere with a constitution that has proved to be invaluable in inspiring confidence among the subscribers in the past. I hope that after what has fallen from the Prime Minister and the Attorney-General as to the modifications to be made in the Bill, the House may come to a unanimous decision now, and proceed to the consideration of the details of the measure on Report without going through the form of a division, which I am sure would be ungracious and probably in all respects inexpedient.

DR. RUTHERFORD said that if the House was agreed that the concessions offered by the promoters of the Bill were valuable—and, speaking for himself, he thought they were good—he would ask leave to withdraw his Motion that the Bill be referred back to the Committee.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Question proposed, "That the Bill be now considered."

*MR. MORTON said that if he understood rightly what the Prime Minister had said, the right hon. Gentleman proposed in somewhat different language what he suggested in the new clause standing in his name on the Paper, that the accounts of the corporation should be annually made up and audited by the Comptroller and Auditor-General, and laid before both Houses of Parliament. He (Mr. Morton) liked his own words best, as being the more courteous form of audit, and begged to formally move.

New clause not seconded.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill, as amended, considered.

Amendments made to the Bill.

Bill to be read the third time.

FINANCE BILL.

Postponed proceeding, resumed.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. CALDWELL, Deputy-Chairman, in the Chair.]

Clause 2:—

COLONEL LOCKWOOD moved to leave out the words "Parliament otherwise determined," and insert "the 1st day of July, 1908." He said that he moved this Amendment, first, because the pressure of the tax was unfair on one particular class, secondly, because the taxation now to be made permanent was promised to be temporary, and, thirdly, because by this clause there would be a partial withdrawal of these taxes from the consideration of Parliament in the annual Budget. It was as well that he should quote the amount of the taxes which would be affected by his Amendment: one shilling per barrel on beer, which yielded £1,672,000; 6d. per gallon on spirits, £1,000,015; and 4d. per pound on tobacco, and 6d. per pound on foreign cigars, £1,100,000. It was proposed to make these taxes permanent, and practically to withdraw them from debate in Parliament. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had stated early in May that his reason for making these taxes permanent, and partially withdrawing them from the consideration of the House, was that although they had been imposed as temporary war taxes, the war debt had not yet been fully discharged, and, in the second place, because the withdrawal of these taxes from debate in the House was a convenient course. No doubt it was highly convenient for any Chancellor of the Exchequer, but to withdraw from Parliament, wholly or partially, the right to review in the fullest and most complete manner any tax, or portion of a tax, was a very serious precedent; and the convenience of other people besides the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to be taken into account. The question should be considered in a very serious way not only by the Opposition, but also by hon. Gentlemen opposite, who, however strong the opinions they held, were sometimes on economical doctrines absolutely sound. If it were a sound principle that they should enable the Chancellor of the Exchequer to withdraw from Parliament wholly or partially the right to review any tax, the principle must be stretched further and applied to the tea tax and the income-tax. The Bill was a serious departure in our system of finance. The powers given in regard to the raising of these additional Customs duties on tobacco, beer, and spirits were exceptional and quite apart from the general sources of income of this country. They affected not only the brewers, distillers, and licensed victuallers, and their dependents, but also the shareholders in a trade which was licensed by the country and on which certain heavy burdens were imposed. These people were entitled to be considered by both sides of the House. He ventured to say that this was a serious departure, because it merged these additional taxes into the general system of finance. He could prove that these taxes were never meant to be permanent, but were imposed for a specific purpose and at a specific time in order to meet a national emergency, and that they were intended to be repealed when the war was over. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had stated, in answer to an inquiry from that side, that as these taxes were meant for war purposes they might fairly be left on until the whole of the war charges had been met. Had the Chancellor of the Exchequer been present he would have asked him to consider the facts of the malt tax imposed during the Crimean War. The increase of the tax was impossd "until the fifth of July next after the ratification of peace and no longer." That was a concrete example of a war tax which was supposed to hold good during the duration of a war and very properly ought to have been repealed immediately after peace had been proclaimed. These taxes to which he called attention, however, remained imposed for war purposes on one class of the community with very little hope of their ever being taken off. Sir Michael Hicks Beach, now Lord St. Aldwyn, when these taxes were imposed, said that he looked upon them as a temporary addition to taxation, and proposed that they should last till 1st August, 1901, not that it might be necessary to leave them on so long, but that they might be dealt with in the Budget of the year. He was not expecting every Chancellor of the Exchequer to be bound by every word of his predecessor, but where it was so clearly laid down that the tax was a temporary war tax they expected that some deference should be paid to the statement, especially when no more formal expression of opinion could have been given to the House. With regard to the view that these taxes might be fairly kept on until all the war expenditure was paid, he would like to know why some of the taxes should be left on while others had been removed, and why exceptional treatment should have been dealt out to alcohol. He knew that there were many Members on both sides of the House who regarded alcohol with detestation. He admired their principles although he did not follow them or agree with them, but it seemed to him that although they had determined to support temperance reform they should not sacrifice everything in favour of it. He did not know whether all the occupants of the Treasury Bench were total abstainers, but he thought not, although he knew that they had temperance opinions. He thought, however, they should limit those opinions within the scope of justice. After all, if the House of Commons was to be set up as the mirror of the opinions of the country that mirror should reflect justice—that common justice which they did not deny to any felon. He asked that justice should be extended to this trade. However much it was disliked by certain Members of the House it should be treated with justice and equality. Hon. Members seemed to think it right, however, that a selected portion of the community, already heavily taxed, should be the bearers of a burden which, if inflicted at all, should be borne by the whole of the community—and this was to be done in perpetuity, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer saw no prospect of being able to relieve the trade of these taxes. The right hon. Gentleman said in reply to a deputation which he received from the licensed trade in March, 1906, praying for a remission of war taxation, that in regard to the main object of their visit he had listened impartially to what had been said, and would take into consideration the arguments brought forward. He would not like the deputation to go away with the impression that there was any probability of any immediate change in the taxation being made, but he would in the future, if it were possible, give effect to the views put forward. Anybody who heard the speech would be of opinion that the right hon. Gentleman had fairly made up his mind that though he could not at the moment change this taxation it was his intention to make the change. But in 1907 not only did the right hon. Gentleman seek to make the tax permanent, but when challenged said it would make no difference in fact. The change was a great one and inflicted on the trade a very heavy burden, and it was unfair to argue now that the continuance of these temporary taxes made no difference. The total yield derived from the liquor trade was 25 per cent. of the Exchequer receipts, and if the amounts given in aid of local taxation were included the liquor trade paid no less than 32 per cent. of the taxation of the United Kingdom, whilst the yield in France from the same source was 9 per cent. and in Germany 5 per cent. This was so small a matter that the right hon. Gentleman did not think it worth while to bring it every year before Parliament and had inserted in his Bill "till Parliament otherwise determine." Then there were the taxes on tobacco and cigars. The burden of taxation had been largely aggravated by the increased assessment of licensed property. Moreover, the liquor trade had to meet the various charges under the Compensation Act of 1904, which amounted to £1,200,000. Those charges, it was true, were not taxation, but they were compulsory, and when all these matters were considered the injustice of making these taxes permanent was clear. He considered the withdrawal by the Government from the consideration of the House of all these war charges really added insult to injury, and was a very considerable departure from the rules. The right hon. Gentleman would acknowledge that he had endeavoured to make out a fair case for those who thought they were being badly treated, and he thought he was entitled to a better explanation than the two he had received, namely, that this taxation must be continued till the war charges were paid, and secondly, that it was a matter of convenience with the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He begged to move.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 6, to leave out the words "Parliament otherwise determine," and insert the words 'the first day of July, nineteen hundred and eight"—(*Colonel Lockwood*)—instead thereof."

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

MR. ASQUITH said it was from no want of courtesy to the right hon. Gentleman that he had not been present to hear the whole of his speech; still, he was sufficiently familiar with the point which it raised. As regarded the general question, the great bulk of our taxation was now permanently on the Statute-book and did not come within the review of the House year by year. There was no real constitutional question involved in the matter at all. The Amendment only dealt with the small surtaxes imposed at the time of the war. As regarded the particular surtaxes referred to, they were, if he remembered aright, 4d. on tobacco, and 1s. on beer. Those surtaxes were imposed by Sir M. Hicks Beach, no doubt in his view for a temporary purpose, but conditions changed and intentions altered. He could not help remembering that the same Chancellor of the Exchequer imposed the corn tax as a permanent tax, yet it disappeared within a year. It was intended to be a permanent tax, and yet it had been the most transient of all our public taxes. He believed the same language was used with regard to the coal tax, which also had gone. The only one of the permanent taxes which Sir M. Hicks Beach imposed in respect of the war which still remained on the Statute-book without any necessity for annual review was the sugar-tax. He saw no reason why they should any longer go through the farce of annually re-enacting these particular taxes, when everybody knew that they had come to stay, and that there was not the slightest disposition at any rate on the part of the present majority to let them go. He could hold out no hope that the present Government would reduce the taxes on tobacco, beer, or spirits, and that being their fixed intention, they reduced the size of the Finance Bill, and got rid of unnecessary clauses by making these taxes part of the fixed taxation of the country.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he sympathised with the natural feeling of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to shorten the proceedings wherever he could, and to take advantage of the opportunity afforded him to get rid of two clauses of the Finance Bill. He confessed that he had come to doubt whether he was right in the views which he had expressed on this subject, but the speech which the right hon. Gentleman had just made instead of winning him over had had the effect of driving him away from him. As he had understood, the right hon. Gentleman's view had been that there was no immediate prospect of giving relief from these duties, but that the mere fact that they did not re-enact them did not prevent the House in future years from inserting new clauses for the special purpose of doing away with them, and, of course, to that extent limiting discussion, because a discussion on a Motion to insert a new clause would necessarily be more limited and narrow than a discussion in Committee on the clause itself. But that was not the view, or the whole view which the right hon. Gentleman had enunciated that night. For now the right hon. Gentleman said distinctly, and for the first time, as far as he knew, that in his opinion these taxes were not merely not to be repealed this year or next year, but that in regard to beer, spirits and tobacco all these taxes were to remain permanently at the figure now charged, and no reduction was to be made. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was not in the House when his right hon. friend quoted from a speech which the right hon. Gentleman had made in reply to a deputation last year, in regard to the beer and spirit interests. He knew the difficulties of the position of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, having had some experience of them, and, therefore, he did not want to lay too much stress on the right hon. Gentleman's words. Still let him remind the Chancellor of the Exchequer of what he had said, and ask him whether he thought it was quite a candid answer to give to the deputation, if he had made up his mind, not merely that in the circumstances of the year he could not give relief to these particular taxpayers, but that it was not in principle a desirable thing to afford them any relief. The right hon. Gentleman said that he would not like the Deputation to go away with the impression that there was any probability of any immediate change in the taxation being made, but he would in the future, if it were possible, give effect to the views which had been put forward. That was the way in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer, contemplating the possibility of at some time making a revision of these taxes, expressed himself. Surely, it was not quite fair to the trade to make a statement of that kind, when he had already made up his mind that in no circumstances whatever in future would he give them any remission of the duties. He had heard what his right hon. friend had said with regard to the remission of this war taxation. He thought that it was a strong case—to impartial people at any rate—a case, in regard to which, no one could blame those who brought it forward for putting it as strongly as they could. What were the facts? The Chancellor who imposed this taxation had to finance a great war, and he had to extend his outlook to expenditure that would continue when war ceased. Lord St. Aldwyn in carrying out his task distinguished between the duties he recommended for permanent existence in our revenue system and those he put on to meet a temporary emergency, and in asking the House and the representatives of the trades concerned to assent to being surcharged he expressed the hope that such taxes would only last for a year, and he clearly expressed his intention of not making them permanent. There were other taxes which he proposed should be made permanent. The present Chancellor of the Exchequer went out of his way to rejoice at the abolition of some of the new sources of revenue, but before many years the country would probably acknowledge that Lord St. Aldwyn was right, and they would regret the abolition. They had now very nearly gone back to the old narrow basis, not strong enough to bear the superstructure to be reared. The taxes concerned in the clause could not be removed under the present conditions of revenue, but he was not at all sure that the taxes on alcohol should permanently remain as high as at present. If they were retained at that rate it was for reasons wholly removed from revenue. The state of the trade, regarded as a revenue-producing machine, was not satisfactory and needed to be carefully watched. However it might be with regard to maintaining the taxes on alcohol in the future, he was not prepared to vote for maintaining the tobacco taxes permanently at their present rate. He had no objection to the high duty on foreign cigars, or to its being raised if thought desirable, but the cheaper kinds of tobacco, such as the smoking mixtures, were too heavily taxed. Other taxes might have a prior claim; but he was not prepared to support the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the policy he had enunciated that night, that under no circumstances ought any of these taxes to be repealed.

MR. LEIF JONES (Westmoreland, Appleby) regretted that the late Chancellor of the Exchequer had somewhat changed his position in reference to the war taxes. When this subject was last before the House he believed that the right hon. Gentleman commended the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the course he had taken, or at any rate he did not dissociate himself from that action. The right hon. Member who moved this Amendment had not given them any good reason why hon. Members should support him in the lobby. It was said, in the first place, by those who supported the Amendment, that by the action of the Chancellor of the Exchequer the surtaxes upon beer, spirits, and tobacco were being withdrawn from the purview of the House. That would be a serious matter if it were true—that the House would have no further opportunity of discussing these taxes. The right hon. Gentleman would see that he had rather destroyed his own case upon that head. The truth was that many other opportunities would be open to hon. Members to discuss these taxes. The right hon. Gentleman had told them that these taxes were intended to be temporary, that they were only put on for the purposes of the war, and that they ought to be taken off now that the war was over. He gave as an instance the case of the malt tax during the Crimean War, which only remained in operation until peace was proclaimed. If the whole of the war expenditure had been paid off, then there might be good reason for asking that the war taxation should be taken off. So long as there was £100,000,000 or more of the National Debt, which had been incurred by the war, it seemed to him that there was not much of a case for arguing that the war taxes should be taken off. The third reason given by the right hon. Gentleman was that the pressure on the liquor trade was unfair, and he had argued that instead of making the temporary taxes permanent they should be taken off soon. He did not know where the right hon. Gentleman got the figures which he quoted, but they did not agree with those given by the Financial Secretary earlier in the year in Answer to a Question of the hon. Member for Lincoln. The Financial Secretary stated that whereas in 1899, before the war taxes were put on, the taxation of the liquor trade amounted to 32 per cent. of the aggregate taxes raised for local and Imperial purposes, in the year 1906 it was only 25 per cent. That being so, the right hon. Gentleman's own argument was rather in favour of increasing than diminishing the taxation of the liquor trade at the present time. He thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer had acted very fairly towards the trade. He was heartily glad that the right hon. Gentleman had announced that there was no prospect in the near future of that proportion being reduced;

*MR. CAVE (Surrey, Kingston) said it seemed to him that the hon. Gentleman opposite had failed to understand the point raised by the Amendment. It was not a question whether it was more convenient that this surtax should be annual or permanent. The question raised by the Amendment was whether Parliament should not for once in a way keep faith with this trade. This particular surtax was put on as a temporary war tax, and the point was whether, the war being over, the tax ought to be continued. When in Opposition the present Foreign Minister said—

> "These taxes (the war taxes) were imposed for the war and ought to be taken off now the war is over."

The President of the Board of Trade when in Opposition said—

> "The House of Commons had got to take the Chancellor of the Exchequer by the throat, in a Parliamentary sense, and tell him that they could not continue these war taxes year after year."

He did not see how, in face of those statements, hon. Members opposite could now maintain that the war taxes ought to be continued until the whole of the debt incurred for the purposes of the war had been paid off.

MR. STANLEY WILSON (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness) supported the Amendment on the ground that it referred to a temporary tax put on for the purpose of the war, and that relief should now be given. It was absolutely wrong that the Government should act as they were doing at the present time in endeavouring to make this a permanent charge on brewers. He could not help thinking that if the Chancellor of the Exchequer would read his own reply to the deputation that came to him from the licensed trade he would reconsider his decision and accept the Amendment.

*MR. BOWLES (Lambeth, Norwood) said he could not help thinking that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had treated this Amendment rather cursorily. The right hon. Gentleman sought to brush it away as a matter of extremely small importance. He took an entirely different view. According to the Budget the right hon. Gentleman proposed to raise £31,740,000 by Customs duties in the current year If the clause had not been proposed, £24,000,000 of that amount would be raised by permanent enactment and £7,250,000 only would have been subject to the annual and inevitable review of the House. That was, surely, not too much. But the right hon. Gentleman here proposed to reduce that £7,250,000 by no less than £2,250,000; so that out of the whole range of our Customs duties amounting to £31,740,000 to be raised this year, the right hon. Gentleman now proposed to leave to the direct annual review of Parliament one head only, namely, the tea duty, amounting to £5,000,000. He maintained that that was a very considerable and serious proposal, and deserved and required a great deal more justification than had been given. The right hon. Gentleman had told the Committee that the largest proportion of our revenue was raised by permanent enactment, and did not come within the purview of Parliament every year. That was true, and he wondered if that was fully realised by the people outside the House. In Answer to a Question he had put the Chancellor of the Exchequer had stated that out of a total revenue of £130,000,000 raised by taxation during 1906–7 no less than 68 per cent. was raised by permanent enactment, never came before the House in any direct way, and would continue to be taken from the people exactly as at present if no House of Commons ever met again. The proportion of revenue raised by permanent enactment was very great, but it had been steadily decreasing for some years. In 1873–74 the total taxation revenue thus withdrawn from discussion in the House of Commons was 88 per cent.; in 1883–4 it was 83 per cent.; in 1893–94 it was 81 per cent.; in 1902–3 it was 69½ per cent.; and last year it was 68 per cent. Now for the first time for thirty years the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the great advocate of economy, came to the House and proposed to set back this wholesome tendency and withdraw no less than 72 per cent. of the revenue from the control of Parliament. No sufficient reason had been given for so great a change; and he held that, irrespective of Party considerations altogether, Parliament should resist any attempt to increase the amount of revenue withdrawn from its review, and so should support his hon. friend's Amendment.

SIR GILBERT PARKER thought that the Committee had every right to complain. In his first Budget the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not lay it down that these war taxes would be permanent, and on his second Budget after much interrogation they had not been able to extract from the right hon. Gentleman any explanation as to why that course should be taken.

MR. ASQUITH said that he had stated that an explanation would be given on Report.

SIR GILBERT PARKER said that he did not clearly understand that, although he had been present when the right hon. Gentleman spoke, nor did he think that it was understood in the country. The right hon. Gentleman said, with an air of triumph and satisfaction which was intended to gain the cheers of his supporters, that these taxes were to be made permanent because they were imposed on the liquor trade; but he had slid them from a temporary into a permanent position without giving an opportunity for adequate discussion. If these taxes were made permanent they would press most unjustly on the licensing trade. That trade had been taxed out of all proportion when the imposts laid upon it were compared with those put upon other industries. He was not entering into the merits of the licensing trade, but if the House put it in a position of legitimacy by their legislative action they ought to deal with the trade with a sense of justice. Hon. Members on the other side of the House had a clear intention of pressing on the licensing trade and of getting out of it all they could. If they were going to check the liquor traffic one could understand that.

***THE CHAIRMAN** said that the question before the House was not one of the quantum of the taxation of the trade, but whether or not this taxation should be continued and made permanent.

SIR GILBERT PARKER apologised for being carried away further than he had intended, and said he was led to advance the argument by the temptation of the moment. On the question before the Committee he thought the right hon. Gentleman had made a mistake, and that this taxation which he had made permanent would not commend itself to the House or to the country when it came to be analysed at the proper time and in the proper place.

SIR F. BANBURY said the hon. Member for Westmoreland had attempted to defend these taxes by saying that so long as £120,000,000 of war tax remained they should not be taken off. That contention could not be sound if it was considered that some £70,000,000 was taken off the present generation and put upon posterity, as it was thought that if that was not done the present generation would bear more than a fair share of the burden of the war. Therefore he did not think it was fair to keep these taxes on until all the war taxes were taken off. There was no instance in history of such a thing having been done, and if the hon. Gentleman really held these views he would ask him why he was in favour of the coal duty and the tea duty being taken off. They also were in the nature of war taxes, and if the hon. Member was consistent he should be in favour of the taxes they were now discussing being taken off. Then the hon. Gentleman said that it amounted to only £2,500,000, but unless the Amendment was accepted that £2,500,000 would become merged in the £70,000,000 of debt, and would be indistinguishable as coming from taxes which had been subscribed for a temporary purpose. He would make one last appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer on this matter. What was it that his right hon. friend asked? He did not ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer to give up a single shilling. All he said was that he should allow these taxes to be earmarked. Moreover, the provisions of the Bill would not assist the right hon. Gentleman in preventing a discussion on the Budget next year. If the Government did not remove these taxes from the permanent taxes and make them temporary by ear-marking them, although no doubt many people would forget that they were put on as temporary taxes, yet it would not prevent many of them who knew what was going on from moving a new clause and raising a discussion on every Budget over and over again.

Colonel **KENYON-SLANEY** (Shropshire, Newport) said he knew that those who were engaged in the liquor trade were not popular in that House, but they were nevertheless entitled to have their case considered. What was the case of the trade now? They were asked by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer to bear a certain heavy portion of the war expenses. He did not think that the trade in question showed any unwillingness to bear their share of the burden. On the contrary, he thought it could fairly be said on behalf of them that they faced the burden put upon them in a very patriotic spirit. What was their position now? After having been called upon to undertake a very heavy burden they thought they could rely upon the promises put forward by those who were then responsible, that those extra taxes should be considered as war taxes, and that they should be relieved as soon as other taxpayers who had received similar promises were relieved from their burdens. The promises they received were quite definite, not only from the then Chancellor of the Exchequer but from his then colleagues, that this relief should be given as soon as possible. They had therefore every right to think that they would be considered equally with other taxpayers who contributed towards the war. That had been their position up to this session of Parliament, but now they found the Chancellor of the Exchequer roundly asserting that these taxes were not to be temporary but permanent, and he seemed rather to rejoice in the fact. He thought that was very hard upon the trade, and a very poor return for the way in which they had faced the burden which had been put upon them. What was the excuse of the right hon. Gentleman? He said that until the whole of the cost of the war was paid they could not be released from this taxation. He would invite the right hon. Gentleman to look at the question in this way. Supposing the total war tax was regarded as a certain amount of capital, and this particular trade was asked to and had underwritten a certain amount of the capital and were to be responsible for the payment if it was allocated to them. If that had been the course of events it would have been possible for them to borrow the money, to pay interest upon it, and to arrange a sinking fund which would provide for its repayment without any hardship upon them. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer were a member of this trade, how would he like to pay these extra demands? It had been said that this trade would have to pay something extra next year. If that was so, they might fairly ask the right hon. Gentleman not to make the surtax permanent, because if they were to come under a further extra burden there was every reason why this tax should not be made permanent now. He hoped he had put before the right hon. Gentleman a point worthy of his consideration.

Viscount **TURNOUR** (Sussex, Horsham) moved to report progress. It was now past Eleven o'clock, and having regard to the fact that the Government had made good progress, he thought the Committee might well adjourn.

*The **CHAIRMAN** said he did not wish this to be discussed until the question now before the Committee was disposed of. He could not take the Motion to report progress just now.

Mr. **RUTHERFORD** (Liverpool, West Derby) said that these taxes were avowedly put on for a temporary purpose and the action of the Government in making them permanent was a distinct breach of faith. If the right hon. Gentleman desired to have a permanent tax he should invent one for himself. When he took a tax imposed by a predecessor, accepted by the House of Commons of the day, and passed into law on the distinct understanding that it should be of a temporary character, it was obvious that in proposing or attempting to make that tax permanent the right hon. Gentleman was guilty of a distinct breach of faith.

Mr. **MOORE** (Armagh, N.) congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on the way the proposal to make this tax permanent had been accepted by hon.

Gentlemen representing Ireland below the gangway. He was in the House when the tax was originally imposed. Every tax proposed as a war tax and then thought to be of a temporary character was bitterly opposed by hon. Gentlemen below the gangway on the ground that the war was an unjust war and one which they did not support or agree with. Now, when it was proposed that those taxes, which year after year had been characterised by hon. Gentlemen below the gangway as being unjust to Ireland, should be made permanent, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he congratulated him upon it, was able to bring in his proposal amid a complete conspiracy of silence on the part of hon. Gentlemen below the gangway.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): That is not true.

MR. MOORE said that when these taxes were temporary taxes they were objected to by hon. Members below the gangway year after year as a matter of principle. Now that it was proposed to make this yoke round the neck of Ireland interminable there had not been one word of opposition save by way of interjection.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Yes, there has; you are wrong.

VISCOUNT TURNOUR: May I call attention to the grossly disorderly remark referring to the observation of my hon. friend as untrue.

*THE CHAIRMAN: The remark did not reach my ear.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said the noble Lord had referred to him very pointedly, and perhaps he would be allowed to say this, by way of explanation. The hon. Gentleman had repeatedly stated that no protest had been made from the benches below the gangway against the permanence of these taxes, except by way of interruption. The hon. Gentleman was not present that afternoon, or he would have heard him protesting very strongly on this point. [Cries of "No; tea."] If the hon. Gentleman looked at the Bill, he would find that tea did not come under the provision at all. He thought that the hon. Gentleman under the circumstances should withdraw.

MR. MOORE: I await your ruling, Sir, on the point of order.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: No; it is not a point of order; it is a point of manners.

MR. MOORE said that he was about to say that there was a curious silence on the part of hon. Gentlemen below the gangway, except by way of interruption. That led him to wonder what case could be made out, why principles should be in abeyance, and why there should be such extraordinary silence except on the part of the hon. Member for Clare.

*THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member had better apply himself to the Amendment.

MR. MOORE said that, as he understood the proposal, it was that a temporary tax should be made permanent. Surely when they had not heard a protest against a proposal to make a temporary tax permanent—

*THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman has been addressing himself almost entirely to hon. Members below the gangway instead of to the merits of the Amendment. I consider that he is out of order.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton) emphasised the fact that hon. Gentlemen below the gangway had persistently resisted the taxes when they were temporary and they were now content that they should be made permanent *sub silentio*. That was a very remarkable thing, and the only objection they had heard, as his hon. friend had said, was by way of interruption. But be that as it might, the public would be able to judge of the proceedings, which he believed would be far better reported in the public Press than the earlier proceedings in Committee of the House.

*THE CHAIRMAN: If the hon. Gentleman has risen to speak to the Amendment he must address himself to it.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY: Am I not in order in referring to the proceedings on this Amendment as likely to be better reported than the other proceedings of the Committee?

***The CHAIRMAN**: No; the hon. Member is not in order in continuing this.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY said he would respectfully bow to the ruling of the Chair. He presumed that the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to make these taxes permanent in order that he might in the shortest possible time extinguish the war taxes. But had it occurred to him that in the efforts that he was making he had been borrowing money at a far higher rate during the last twelve months than the rate which was paid for the service of the war? The facts as soon as they were explained showed that the maintaining of common sense and sound finance was the very last thing that entered the heads of hon. Gentlemen opposite.

***The CHAIRMAN**: I must warn the hon. Gentleman that he is out of order.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY said he desired to follow the ruling of the Chair, but it was rendered difficult by reason of the interruptions of hon. Members. The point he wished to make was this. Was it good finance to borrow money at a high rate of interest to extinguish the debt when the right hon. Gentleman could, by leaving things as they were, pay a far less rate of interest?

***The CHAIRMAN** called the attention of the Committee to the continued irrelevance on the part of Mr. Claude Hay the Member for the Hoxton Division, and directed the hon. Member to discontinue his speech.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND said the hon. Gentleman for North Armagh, in the course of his speech, said no protest had been made by hon. Members below the gangway in reference to the permanency of these taxes. If the hon. Gentleman had been present earlier in the evening he would have heard the speech delivered by himself in which the strongest possible protest was made, and he thought that being so the hon. Gentleman ought to withdraw his observation. No matter how Members might differ on various questions, they generally recognised that if they made a mis-statement, the moment attention was called to it the mis-statement was withdrawn. He did not know whether the hon. Member would be willing to withdraw his statement.

***The CHAIRMAN**: I hope the hon. Member will not make a speech of a similar kind to that which I have just ruled out of order. If he does I shall have to deal with him in the same way if I am to be fair to all parties alike.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND said he refused to submit to having a mis-statement with reference to himself made without protest. He protested most strongly against the mis-statement made by the hon. Member for Armagh, and if under the circumstances he did not see his way to withdraw it, he would leave his action to the opinion of hon. Members.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 197; Noes, 99. (Division List No. 259).

AYES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Adkins, W. Ryland D.
Agnew, George William
Alden, Percy
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Asquith, Rt. Hon Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnes, G. N.
Barry, Redmond J. (Tyrone, N.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beck, A. Cecil
Bellairs, Carlyon
Belloc, Hilaire Joseph Peter R.
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brigg, John
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Bryce, J. Annan
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Cheetham, John Frederick
Clough, William
Coats, Sir T. Glen-(Renfrew, W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras, W.

Cooper, G. J.
Corbett,CH(Sussex,E.Grinst'd)
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dickinson,W.H.(St.Pancras,N.
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne,MajorE.Martin (Walsall
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Sir Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Esslemont, George Birnie
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Findlay, Alexander
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.HerbertJohn
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Glant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon,RtHn.SirW. Brampton
Harmsworth,Cecil B.(Worc'r)
Harmsworth,R.L.(Caithn'ss-sh
Harvey,W.E.(Derbyshire,N.E.
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hedges, A. Paget
Henderson,J.M, (Aberdeen,W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert,Col.SirIvor(Mon.,S.)
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hodge, John
Holland, Sir William Henry
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones,William(Carnarvonshire)
Kekewich, Sir George
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
Lamb,Edmund G. (Leominster)
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever,A.Levy (Essex,Harwich)
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lowe, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks,G.Croydon (Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Montagu, E. S.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd(Carmarthen)
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murray, James
Napier, T. B.
Nicholls, George
Nicholson,CharlesN.(Doncast'r
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Grady, J,
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pollard, Dr.
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh,Central)
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea,Walter Russell(Scarboro')
Renton, Major Leslie
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson,SirG.Scott(Bradf'rd
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Sanmuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann,SirC.E.(Manchester)
Seaverns, J. H.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley,Hn.A.Lyulph(Chesh.)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas,SirA.(Glamorgan, E.)
Thomasson, Franklin
Thompson,J.W.H.(Somerset,E.
Toulmin, George
Verney, F. W.
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walton, Sir John L. (Leeds, S.)
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent)
Waring, Walter
Wason,Rt.Hn.E.(Clackmannan
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, Henry A.
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wiles. Thomas
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wodehouse, Lord
Wood, T. M'Kinnon.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Abraham,William (Cork,N. E.)
Acland-Hood,RtHn. SirAlex.F.
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt.Hon .SirH.
Balcarres, Lord
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Baring,Capt.Hn.G(Winchester)
Beach, Hn.Michael Hugh Hicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Boland, John
Bowles, G. Stewart
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Burke, E. Haviland-
Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. H. M.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Cave, George
Cavendish,Rt. Hon.VictorC.W.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Chamberlain,RtHn.J.A.(Worc.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Craig,CharlesCurtis (Antrim,S.)
Craik, Sir Henry
Dalrymple, Viscount
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Faber, George Denison (York)
Faber, Capt. W. V. (Hants, W.)
Fell, Arthur
Ffrench, Peter
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Fletcher, J. S.
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gordon, J.
Gretton, John
Gwynn, Stephen Lucius
Haddock, George R.
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hazleton, Richard
Helmsley, Viscount
Hervey,F.W.F.(BuryS.Edm'ds
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hogan, Michael
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway,Rt.Hon.SirJohnH.
Kenyon-Slaney,Rt.Hon.Col.W.

Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm
Lardner, James Carrige Rushe
Law, Andrew Bonar (Dulwich)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Dublin, S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lundon, W.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, W.
Marks, H. H. (Kent)
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Meagher, Michael
Mooney, J. J.
Moore, William
Murnaghan, George
Nicholson, Wm. G. (Petersfield)
Nolan, Joseph
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parker, Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington)
Rawlinson, John Frederick Peel
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Ronaldshay, Earl of
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sheffield, Sir Berkeley George D.
Smith, F. E. (Liverpool, Walton)
Smyth, Thomas F. (Leitrim, S.)
Starkey, John R.
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thornton, Percy M.
Turnour, Viscount
Walker, Col. W. H. (Lancashire)
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Warde, Col. C. E. (Kent, Mid)
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Colonel Lockwood and Sir Frederick Banbury.

Clause 2 agreed to.

Clause 3 agreed to.

On Clause 4:—

MR. RUNCIMAN moved to leave out the words, "for any purpose."

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN asked an explanation as to what the clause was about.

MR. RUNCIMAN said that it provided for an alteration in the method of ascertaining the strength of spirits. At present the statute provided that it should be ascertained by means of a hydrometer, and if the right hon. Gentleman wished to know more about that instrument he could only recommend him to look up an encyclopædia. There were two objections to the use of the hydrometer. One was that a certain amount of spirit must be used to float it, and in that way a tenth of a gallon was wasted when it was used. The second objection was that there were some kinds of spirits for which it could not be used. The method now proposed was desired not only by the Revenue authorities, but by the owners of alcohol.

Amendment proposed—

> "In page 2, line 19, to leave out the words 'for any purpose.'"—(*Mr. Runciman.*)

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause," put, and negatived.

Amendment proposed—

> "In page 2, line 20, after the word 'ascertaining,' to insert the words 'for any purpose.'"—(*Mr. Runciman.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and agreed to.

Question proposed, "That the clause stand part of the Bill."

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD said the manufacturers of spirits should have some assurance that they would not be put to inconvenience by the change. If manufacturers of spirits had already ascertained the strength by using Sykes's hydrometer, they might find that the new method would operate very unfairly in the event of its being suddenly sprung upon them. He wished to know when the new regulations would come into force, and whether they would be of general application.

MR. ASQUITH said the clause was conceived, in the interest not only of the Revenue, but of merchants. The present system was found to involve a certain amount of loss and inconvenience to merchants, and the change was proposed in order that the work of finding the strength of spirits might be more conveniently accomplished. The regulations would be advertised in the *Gazette*, they would be uniform, and they would add to the general convenience of the trade.

Question put, and agreed to.

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

And, it being after half-past Eleven of the clock, Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Adjourned at Five minutes before Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 2nd July, 1907.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with: North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply.

Also the Certificate that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with: Central London Railway.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Central London Railway Bill.—Examiners' Certificate of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Monday next.

Leeds Corporation Bill.—Reported, with Amendments.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill.—Reported, without Amendment, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House Tomorrow.

Great Northern and City Railway Bill. —Reported, with an Amendment.

Tramways Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.]; Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.].—Reported, with Amendments, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow.

Portishead District Water Bill [H.L.].—Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

General Accident Fire and Life Assurance Corporation, Limited, Bill [H.L.]; Ocean Accident and Guarantee Corporation Bill [H.L.].—Returned from the Commons agreed to.

Kingston-upon-Hull Corporation Bill. —Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Suffield be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bill in the place of the Lord Bowes (*E. Strathmore and Kinghorn*); read, and agreed to.

Dundee Corporation Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.].—Read 2ª (according to order), and (pursuant to the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899) deemed to have been reported from the Committee; and Bill to be read 3ª To-morrow.

PETITION.

QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN (COUNTY AND BOROUGH COUNCILS) BILL [H.L.].

Petition against; of the Westminster City Council; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

FRANCE (No. 1), 1907.

Despatch from His Majesty's Ambassador at Paris transmitting the Treaty between France and Siam; signed at Bangkok, 23rd March, 1907.

FISHERIES (SCOTLAND).

Twenty-fifth Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland, being for the year 1906. Part II. Salmon Fisheries.

Presented (by Command) and ordered to lie on the Table.

THE ARTILLERY.

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I beg to ask the noble Earl the Under-Secretary of State for War a Question of which I have given him private notice, arising out of a discussion that took place last night in regard to the Royal Artillery. The Question is whether His Majesty's Government are prepared to postpone any further reduction in the Regular Artillery until properly qualified men of the Special Contingent are available to take their place.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Earl of PORTSMOUTH): My Lords, I must express my thanks to the noble Marquess for having given me private notice of the Question. In reply I would beg to refer him to a statement which I made on July 24th of last year. I then said—

> "There will be no reduction in the artillery until trained Militiamen, liable to serve abroad, can take their place."

Our policy in this matter has not changed, and we do not intend to make any reduction in the Regular Artillery until properly qualified men of the Special Contingent are available to take their place.

SALMON AND FRESHWATER FISHERIES BILL [H.L.].

House in Committee (according to Order).

[The Earl of ONSLOW in the Chair.]

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2:—

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN had Amendments on the Paper to insert the word "provisional" before the word "Order" in three places in this clause and in several places in subsequent clauses. He explained that these were merely drafting Amendments, but were for the purpose of securing the uniform use of the phrase "provisional order." As the clause now stood, the term "provisional order" was used in one or two instances, and the word "order" in others. It was desirable that there should be no doubt what was meant, and he hoped his noble friend in charge of the Bill would have no objection to inserting the word "provisional." He begged to move the first Amendment standing in his name.

Amendment moved—

> "In page 2, line 2, after the second 'the' to insert the word 'provisional.'"—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES (Earl CARRINGTON) said the general principle adopted by the draftsman had been to use the expression "provisional order" once in each clause and subclause, and to subsequently refer to it as the "order." The insertion of the word "provisional" in the place now proposed was unnecessary. He was afraid, therefore, he could not accept the Amendment.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN asked the noble Earl to give his reason for not accepting the first Amendment.

EARL CARRINGTON repeated that the general principle adopted by the draftsman had been to use the expression "provisional order" once in each clause or sub-clause and to subsequently refer to it as the "order." To call it a provisional order in every case would require about a dozen Amendments beyond those on the Paper. The Amendments were purely drafting, and, if adopted, would not in any way affect the Bill. He appealed to the noble Earl, in these circumstances, not to press his Amendment. The Government were perfectly willing to agree to the insertion of the word "provisional" in two cases later.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said the argument the noble Earl had used was a good one for rejecting the word "provisional" in every case where he proposed to insert it. Why in two particular cases he was willing to accept the Amendment and not in others he could not understand.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (The Earl of ONSLOW) thought Lord Carrington's point was quite clear. Clause 2 commenced with the words, "Any such provisional order," and the noble Earl's contention was that the word "order" wherever used again in that clause necessarily meant the provisional order.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN did not press the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

EARL CARRINGTON said his first Amendment was intended to enable the Board to deal with such cases as the abolition of netting in narrow water, which might be desirable in the general interests of the river but might seriously injure particular fishing. In the absence of some power to secure the payment of compensation difficulty might arise in staving off objection to an order on this ground. It was not intended in any way that the powers should be exercised in such a manner as to encourage claims for compensation by every person who felt aggrieved by the means taken to improve the river generally.

Amendment moved—

"In page 3, line 7, after the word 'provisions,' to insert the words 'including provisions for payment of compensation to persons injuriously affected by the order.'"—(*Earl Carrington.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

THE EARL OF DENBIGH moved to insert a new subsection, which, he said, had been drafted for the purpose of meeting a grievance felt by owners of fishery establishments. He understood that the noble Earl in charge of the Bill would accept the Amendment.

Amendment moved—

"In page 3, line 23, after the word 'advertisement' to insert as a new subsection: '(4) An order under this Act shall not apply to any waters in which the business of artificially propagating or rearing salmon or trout is carried on under a licence granted by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, and any such licence may be granted by the Board, subject to such conditions (if any) as they think fit, and may be revoked if the Board are of opinion that any condition has not been observed.'"—(*The Earl of Denbigh.*)

EARL CARRINGTON said it had been pointed out that to include fish farms in a district and to subject them to assessment would be likely seriously to hamper this industry. Fish farms, moreover, would not derive material benefit from the conservancy of the river. He thought the Amendment ought to be accepted, as it only referred to farms that were *bonâ fide* and carried on under proper conditions.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 3:—

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said he supposed the noble Earl would accept the Amendment to insert the word "provisional" in this case, as the word "order" was here the second word of the clause.

Amendment moved—

"In page 3, line 24, to leave out the word 'An,' and to insert the words 'A provisional.'"—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

EARL CARRINGTON accepted the Amendment.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

LORD NEWTON moved to substitute "one-fourth" for "one-tenth." The clause as proposed to be amended would read—

"An order under this Act shall not be made except on the application of a board of conservators constituted under the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Acts, or of a county council, or of persons who, in the opinion of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, are the owners of 'one-fourth' at least in value of the private fisheries proposed to be regulated or constitute a majority of the persons holding licences to fish in public waters within the area of the proposed order. . . ."

He explained that he had put down this Amendment because it had been represented to him that one-tenth was much too small a proportion to bring into effect the rather complicated machinery of this Bill. It appeared to him rather unreasonable that it should be within the power of, perhaps, one individual to put persons to considerable trouble and expense; and he suggested, therefore, that the proportion of one-tenth should be altered to one-fourth.

Amendment moved—

"In page 3, line 28, to leave out the word 'one-tenth' and to insert the word 'one-fourth.'"—(*Lord Newton.*)

EARL CARRINGTON said he was quite prepared to accept the Amendment.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

EARL CARRINGTON moved to amend the provision—

"Every such application shall be advertised in such manner as the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries direct"—

by inserting, after the word "advertised," the words "by the applicants."

The provision as it stood was, he said, ambiguous as to the party responsible for advertising the application, and the Amendment was intended to remedy this. They wanted to make it quite clear by whom the advertisement was to be made.

Amendment moved—

"In page 3, line 32, after the word 'advertised' to insert the words 'by the applicants.'" —(*Earl Carrington.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 3, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 4:—

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN again moved to insert the word "provisional," and said that to be consistent the noble Earl must accept the Amendment in this case.

Amendment moved—

"In page 3, line 36, to leave out the word 'an,' and to insert the words 'a provisional.'" —(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

EARL CARRINGTON accepted the Amendment.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN then moved to insert the words "terms of the draft" before the word "order" in the last line of Subsection 2, which, as amended, would read—

"The Board may, if they think it expedient, hold a local inquiry by an inspector or other officer of the Board with respect to any objections made to the draft order, and shall, after considering all such objections and the report of the officer who held the inquiry (if any) thereon, settle the 'terms of the draft' order."

The term "settle the order," at present in the subsection, was not one which had often been used in drafting. He thought it appeared in one of the Land Bills this year, but, as far as he could make out, the term might be taken, in the absence of some explanation, to mean that the Board would have the power to settle the order itself, especially with reference to the provision in the next clause that the Board might submit the order to Parliament for confirmation. He supposed that the meaning was that the Board of Agriculture should settle the terms of the draft order, and it was better to make that plain by inserting the words in his Amendment.

Amendment moved—

"In page 4, line 12, after the second 'the,' to insert the words 'terms of the draft.'"—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

EARL CARRINGTON said the Government considered the Amendment an improvement of the clause and gladly accepted it.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 4, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 5:—

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN moved to provide that, if while the confirming Bill is pending in either House, a petition is presented against any order comprised therein, the Bill, so far as it relates to that order, "shall" be referred to a Select Committee, and not "may," as provided in the clause. Under the clause as it stood there was no obligation to refer to a Select Committee. Surely the petitioner ought to have the right to have his case heard, and to secure this it was essential that the word "may" should be altered to "shall."

Amendment moved—

"In page 4, line 20, to leave out the word 'may' and insert the word 'shall.'"—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

EARL CARRINGTON could not accept the Amendment because the Standing Orders of the two Houses made the necessary provision for dealing with opposed Provisional Orders by referring them to Committees. Therefore the Amendment was unnecessary. There was another objection—namely, that by accepting the Amendment they would be departing from the model form. In the circumstances he hoped the noble Earl would not press the Amendment.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said the argument of the noble Earl appeared to be that the Amendment was unnecessary, because the Standing Orders of both Houses stated that where a petition was presented the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee. If that was provided for by the Standing Orders, what possible objection could there be to the Bill also stating that there should be a reference to a Committee? If the word "may" were left in, a doubt would be created which was only removed by the application of the Standing Orders of Parliament to the clause. The noble Earl had said that whether "may" did or did not stand part of the clause the result was the same. If that was so, it was better to use wording about which there could be no mistake. His noble friend had followed this course in several Amendments in the Agricultural Holdings Act of last year, and he was afraid that as a result he (Lord Camperdown) would have to trouble the House a little later by showing what a mistake had been committed through not pointing out clearly what was intended. It was much better to state what was meant, and he would, therefore, press the Amendment.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 5, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 6 :—

EARL CARRINGTON moved to omit Subsection (1), which provided that the expenses incurred by the Board of Agriculture in respect of any order should be paid by the applicants for the order. He said that this provision might bear hardly on small fisheries boards, whose funds were rather limited. He moved this Amendment as the result of the objection that was taken to the subsection on the Second Reading of the Bill by the Earl of Harewood.

Amendment moved—

"In page 4, lines 30 to 36, to leave out Subsection (1)."—(*Earl Carrington.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 7 :—

EARL CARRINGTON said the object of his Amendment to this clause was to make it quite clear that, though the Crown was not, without consent, to be bound in any way by the Bill, it would be possible, with a proper consent given on behalf of the Crown or the Duchy affected, to include the Crown or Duchy fisheries within the scope of any order made under the Bill.

Amendment moved—

"In page 5, line 8, after the word 'Act' to insert the words 'or any fishery proposed to be affected by any such order.'"—(*Earl Carrington.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Consequential Amendments agreed to.

Clause 7, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 8 :—

EARL CARRINGTON moved the insertion of the words "in Dumfriesshire" to remove any ambiguity as to which Esk was referred to, there being more than one river of that name.

Amendment moved—

"In page 5, line 36, after the word 'Esk' to insert the words 'in Dumfriesshire.'"—(*Earl Carrington.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Bill reported with Amendments to the House.

Bill re-committed to the Standing Committee; and to be printed as amended. (No. 90.)

LIMITED PARTNERSHIP BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

LORD AVEBURY: My Lords, as your Lordships were good enough to pass this Bill through all its stages, when I proposed it last year, and as it was also passed some years ago when proposed by Lord Bramwell, it is probably not necessary for me now to detain you for more than a few minutes in moving the Second Reading. Last year it was lost in the other House, not from any opposition, but from lack of time. It has now passed the House of Commons, and the discussions there turned merely on points of detail. The object is to introduce the system which abroad is known as *commandite*, which has been in operation for many years in Europe and the United States, and is found most useful. It was examined some years ago by a Parliamentary Committee, which reported in its favour. It is supported by the chambers of commerce, and, indeed, by commercial opinion generally. Some good judges have considered that if it had been introduced before limited liability, much loss of capital would have been avoided. The Bill is substantially as passed by your Lordships last year, but there are some changes in detail, which in our judgment are not altogether in the right direction, and as to which it may be necessary to say something in Committee, but I need not trouble the House in the matter at the present stage. Last year there was no opposition, and I hear of none now. His Majesty's Government have been good enough to inform me that they do not oppose the Bill, and in these circumstances I will not go into any details at the present stage, but without more words will move the Second Reading.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*Lord Avebury.*)

THE EARL OF GRANARD: My Lords, the Bill which my noble friend has asked your Lordships to read a Second Time to-night is one to which His Majesty's Government do not propose to offer any opposition, although they naturally reserve the right of introducing Amendments at a later stage should that course be considered necessary. The system of limited partnerships, or the *en commandite* system, seems to have worked excellently in other countries in which it has been in force and to have been of great help to commercial industries. This subject was brought before the Departmental Committee on Company Law which sat at the Board of Trade two or three years ago, and the Report of that Committee was unanimously in favour of introducing the system into this country. I do not think it is necessary for me to say more at the present stage, but simply to ask your Lordships to give the Bill your favourable consideration.

On Question, Bill read 2ª, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

Lord Avebury.

BRITISH NORTH AMERICA BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Earl of ELGIN): My Lords, I have not much to say in explanation of this Bill. It deals with payments from the Dominion Government of Canada to the Provinces of Canada, but it is necessary to have legislation in this country because these payments come in substitution for the payments which are provided for in the British North America Act, 1867. A conference was held at Ottawa between the Dominion Government and the Provincial Governments, and the provisions of this Bill follow on an address from the Dominion Government which represented the findings of that conference. There is this urgency about the matter, that to meet the financial requirements of the provinces it was desired that the Bill should be enacted before 1st July. Owing to delays in another place that has not been possible, but I hope your Lordships will be disposed to give the Bill a Second Reading to-day, and allow it to take the other stages early next week. I beg to move.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Earl of Elgin.*)

On Question, Bill read 2ª, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House.

QUEEN'S BARRACKS, PERTH.

THE EARL OF KINNOULL: My Lords, I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for War whether the recruits' receiving room at Queen's Barracks, Perth, is considered by the authorities as adequate and sanitary; whether a bathroom is provided in these quarters separate from the bath accommodation for duly enlisted men; and whether a bathroom has been provided for the officers' quarters in Queen's Barracks but no bath, and no provision made for the supply of either cold or hot water.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: My Lords, in reply to the first two Questions of the noble Earl I may inform him that the matter of the recruits' receiving room and the provision of a separate bathroom are at present under consideration, and we are in correspondence with the local military authorities on the subject. In reply to the other Question, the provision of a bathroom for the officers' quarters has been approved if the necessary funds can be found from the annual allotment made to the General Officer commanding in the Scottish Command. The completion of the service is temporarily suspended, I am sorry to say, for want of funds, but every effort will be made to provide the necessary funds as soon as possible.

THE EARL OF KINNOULL: The reply to my last Question is hardly a complete Answer. What I wanted to elicit was why a bathroom had been allotted and other moneys spent on works in barracks which were never required and not asked for, and why a bathroom was provided but no bath. Perhaps the noble Earl can tell me when the funds will be found to provide the bath.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: I can assure the noble Earl that the funds will be found as soon as possible.

THE MILITIA AND THE ARMY BILL.

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD: My Lords, I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for War—(1) What is the form of attestation to be signed by a Militiaman of each branch of the service on his transfer from the Militia to the Army Reserve as proposed by the Territorial and Reserve Forces Bill? (2) Is it proposed to give any bounty to the Militiamen to induce them to transfer to the 3rd and 4th battalions? (3) What is to be the pay, bounty, and allowances of the Militiamen when transferred to the Army Reserve under the Bill? (4) What is to be the rate of pay of the recruits joining the proposed new 3rd and 4th battalions? (5) Is it proposed that the arrangements now applying to the Militia as regards clothing should be continued to the new 3rd and 4th battalions? (6) Will the Militia non-commissioned officers who transfer to the 3rd and 4th battalions when called upon to serve with the Regular line battalions, 1st and 2nd, be allowed to retain their rank? (7) On what terms will a Militiaman who has transferred to the new 3rd and 4th battalions be allowed to purchase his discharge from the Army? (8) If any bounty is given to a Militiaman to transfer to the new 3rd and 4th battalions will he be required to refund such bounty on joining the Colours? (9) Will Militiamen now serving who elect to remain under the Militia Act of 1882 until time expired, and who are not called up for training, receive non-training bounty? and (10) Will Militiamen now serving be allowed to take their discharge free if they decide not to join the new 3rd and 4th battalions or the Territorial Army?

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: My Lords, the Answers to the ten Questions put to me by the noble Duke are as follows:—(1) An attestation form has been drawn up, to be signed by a Militiaman of each branch on his transfer from the Militia to the Special Reserve. (2) It is our intention to offer a bonus of £2 to every Militiaman of over one year's service who is permitted and agrees to transfer. (3) We propose that (*a*) the pay and allowances shall be as at present for Militia; (*b*) the bounties will be rather less than at present, in view of the shorter annual training; they will amount to £4 instead of £4 10s. (4) The rate of pay will be as now for Militia recruits. (5) The issues of clothing are at present under consideration. (6) Yes. (7) This Question involves numerous and complicated details which have not yet been finally settled. (8) Men who receive a bounty to transfer to the Special Contingent will not be allowed to join the Regulars within one year without refunding the bounty. (9) Yes. (10) Yes.

LORD BLYTHSWOOD: Might I ask the noble Earl whether the attestation paper is sufficiently ready, so that we may be able to see it?

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: The reason I have not been able to give the form is that it is not yet complete, but as soon as it is ready I shall be very glad to lay it on the Table.

VISCOUNT MIDLETON: My Lords, in reference to the reply of the noble Earl the Under-Secretary to Question No. 2, dealing with the bounty which it is proposed to offer to Militiamen, might I ask him whether the Government have considered that under the present rates of pay the Militia is largely short of its establishment, and that the £2 bounty proposed to be given on one occasion only to induce the Militia to undertake very grave additional duties is out of all proportion to what has been given in the past; and whether His Majesty's Government have any reason to think that the £2 bounty will be sufficient to obtain the men whom we all desire should be obtained.

[No Answer was returned.]

SECOND CHAMBERS IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: My Lords, I beg to move, on behalf of the Committee now sitting in your Lordships' House, for a Return of the Second Chambers in foreign countries, their composition, and their functions. I understand that the Return is unopposed.

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty for a Return of the Second Chambers in foreign countries, their composition, and their functions."—(*The Lord Rosebery* (*E. Rosebery*).)

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (The Marquess of RIPON): His Majesty's Government will be very happy to give the Return asked for.

On Question, Motion agreed to, and ordered accordingly.

TRAINING OF THE SPECIAL RESERVE.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for War what arrangements are proposed for the training, preliminary and annual, of the Special Reserve or Militia, in pursuance of the Territorial and Reserve Forces Bill. Your Lordships will remember that some six weeks ago the noble Earl the Under-Secretary was good enough, in reply to my noble friend Lord Wemyss, to give an account of what the training would probably be of the Special Reservists under the Territorial Forces Bill. I do not know whether the Government still adhere precisely to the terms which he then stated. There has been, of course, a substantial change in the Bill since he spoke, because now the Militia are to be the Special Reserve which formerly they were not to be; and I beg to put this Question in order that your Lordships should be fully informed of how this training really stands.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: My Lords, I make no complaint that this Question has been asked, and I am glad to give the noble Marquess all the information in my power. It is proposed that the training, preliminary and annual, of the Special Reserve (infantry) shall be as follows:—Recruits, preliminary training on enlistment, six months; annual training, fifteen days, and in addition a course comprising six days musketry practice. The above periods of training may require modification when practical experience has been obtained. It may prove of advantage to reduce somewhat the period of recruits' preliminary training and to lengthen somewhat the period of annual training. The recruits' training of the 3rd and 4th battalions will be carried out at the depots, and an adequate staff will be provided for the purpose. In certain cases it may be necessary to permit some units to carry out their instruction of recruits by means of "preliminary drill" immediately prior to annual training. The annual training will be usually carried out as battalions in camp in suitable localities. The annual musketry will be carried out as is found most convenient to battalions, possibly either immediately before or immediately after the annual training, or even at other times if found more convenient to the battalion. By means of this elasticity, it would not be necessary for the battalion to perform its musketry practices as a whole.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: The noble Earl, in the earlier part of his Answer, spoke of the preliminary drill for recruits and then of the annual drill for recruits. He did not specifically mention the annual training of the trained men other than recruits.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: There may be some modification, but I think that practically and substantially the training will be the same.

THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE: Can the noble Earl tell us whether there will be pay during the six days of musketry practice, and what will happen if men do not turn up? Will they be treated as deserters?

[No answer was returned.]

LORD BLYTHSWOOD: Is it intended that the battalion recruits should be drilled at the depot? If so, I can assure the noble Earl that there will be a great deal of difficulty in getting the men. If, on the other hand, the Government allow the recruits to drill in camp, plenty of men will be forthcoming; but the experience in Scotland, at any rate, shows that they will not come to the depot. A few years ago, before drilling at the depot was adopted, one battalion I could name was 1,200 strong; it is now only 400; whilst the regiment that I commanded, and which has never drilled at the depot, remains at the same strength —*i.e.*, over 900 strong.

House adjourned at a quarter past Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 2nd July, 1907.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Electric Supply Corporation Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

Burnham (Somerset) Pier Bill [Lords];—As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [Lords].—Read a second time, and committed.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 13) Bill (by Order).—Read the third time, and passed.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to:—Land Drainage Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill; Land Drainage Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill; Hull and Barnsley Railway Bill, with Amendments.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Board of Education under the Education Acts, 1870 to 1903, to enable the London County Council to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts. [Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London, No. 1) Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the rural district of Ballycastle, the Bangor and Newtownards Joint Hospital, county Down, and the urban district of Dalkey." [Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill [Lords].

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer further powers upon the Portishead District Water Company; and for other purposes." [Portishead District Water Bill [Lords].

Land Drainage Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill.—Lords' Amendments to be considered To-morrow.

Land Drainage Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill.—Lords' Amendments to be considered To-morrow.

Portishead District Water Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London, No. 1) Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; referred to the

Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 262.]

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; Referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 263.]

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill.—Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table. Bill to be read the third time to-morrow.

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions for alteration: From Aberdeen; Airdrie; and Glasgow; to lie upon the Table.

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY (INSURANCE COMPANIES) BILL.

Petition from Walsall, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

HOME WORK REGULATION BILL.

Petition from Walsall, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

JURORS (EXPENSES) BILL.

Petition from Walsall, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LIGHTS ON VEHICLES BILL.

Petition from Walsall, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LIMITED PARTNERSHIPS BILL.

Petition from Walsall, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petition from Bristol, against; to lie upon the Table.

MERCHANDISE MARKS BILL.

Petition from Walsall, against; to lie upon the Table.

PAUPER LUNATICS (COST OF MAINTENANCE).

Petition from Reading, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

TRUST INVESTMENT BILL.

Petition from Walsall, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

WAGES BOARDS BILL.

Petition from Walsall, against; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

FRANCE (NO. 1, 1907).

Copy presented, of Despatch from His Majesty's Ambassador at Paris transmitting the Treaty between France and Siam. Signed at Bangkok, 23rd March, 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PROSECUTION OF OFFENCES ACTS, 1879 AND 1884.

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 27th June; *Mr. Herbert Samuel*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 230.]

FISHERY BOARD (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented of Twenty-fifth Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland, being for the year 1906. Part II. Salmon Fisheries [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) (NON-PROVIDED SCHOOLS).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 23rd February, 1906; *Mr. Birrell*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 231.]

TELEGRAPH CONSTRUCTION BILL.

Copy ordered, "of Memorandum explanatory of the Telegraph Construction Bill."—(*Mr. Sydney Buxton.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 232.]

COASTGUARD STATIONS (CLOSED).

Return ordered, "showing number and names of Coastguard Stations closed since the 26th day of June, 1905, stating those at which a rocket apparatus was worked wholly or in part by the Coastguard or to which a lifeboat station was adjoining, and what arrangements are now being made at such stations for the notification of wrecks and life-saving services."—(*Major Seely.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Salving Arrangements for Submarines.

MR. NIELD (Middlesex, Ealing): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, having regard to the increasing number of submarines in commission, any, and what, steps have been taken to provide adequate salvage vessels and appliances for the speedy and more effectual recovery of vessels of this class which, from one cause or another, may be so injured as to prevent their own crews from bringing them to the surface.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) No special salvage vessels have been obtained for raising submarine boats, but mooring lighters are fitted with a view of effecting their recovery should occasion arise, and trials of a life-saving apparatus for individual members of the crews are also in progress.

Duties of Public Veterinary Surgeons.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Secretary for Scotland what are the duties of veterinary surgeons under the Public Health Act in diseases transmissible from animals to man by milk or meat; what use does the medical officer of health make of the advice given in matters purely veterinary; and whether the veterinary adviser reports through the medical officer of health or direct to the sanitary authority.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) The duties of veterinary surgeons are contained in Sections 43 and 60 of The Public Health Act, 1897. The use that a medical officer of health will make of any information or advice obtained from the veterinary surgeon will depend on the nature and circumstances of the individual case. With regard to the last part of the Question, when proceedings are taken under Section 60, the veterinary surgeon's report, if any, is, in terms of the Statute, submitted to the local authority by the medical officer of health. In proceedings under Section 43 there is no statutory rule as to the reports, and it is for each local authority to determine whether any report under that section shall be submitted direct or through the medical officer of health. But in all cases it is the duty of the medical officer of health to advise his local authority as to the measures necessary to prevent the direct or indirect transmission of the disease to human beings, and, so far as authorised by Statute or otherwise, to execute or superintend the execution of those measures.

Overcrowding of West Ham Public Elementary Schools.

MR. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.): To ask the President of the Board of Education with regard to the overcrowding in West Ham public elementary schools, whether the regulations by the Board of Education allow as many as 100 children to be placed in a class-room only accommodating sixty, even for a single day.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) Article 19 of the Code provides that—"The number of scholars in average attendance must not exceed the recognised accommodation, and no room may be habitually used for a larger number of scholars than that for which it is passed by the Board." It is obviously undesirable that overcrowding should exist in any class-room, even for a single day, but I fear it would be impossible for the Board of Education to lay down any hard and fast rule as to the maximum number of children who may in any conceivable circumstances be taught in any one room for a single day.

Inspection of Metropolitan Poor Law Infirmaries.

MR. W. F. D. SMITH (Strand, Westminster): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the Metropolitan Poor Law infirmaries are visited by inspectors of the Board at regular intervals or only occasionally, at the discretion of the inspectors; and whether considerable intervals are sometimes allowed to elapse between inspections.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) These infirmaries are, in ordinary circumstances, visited at regular intervals as well as occasionally, either at the discretion of the inspectors or for special reasons. All the infirmaries have been inspected this year by the assistant inspectors, and a considerable number have also been visited by the senior medical inspector for Poor Law purposes. I may add that the arrangements in connection with these inspections are now under consideration.

Rosyth—Acreage and Price of Land Purchase.

MR. J. D. WHITE (Dumbartonshire): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty with reference to the property purchased at Rosyth in 1903–4 from Lord Linlithgow, from Mr. Newton, and from the Minister of Inverkeithing and Mr. Newton, respectively, what in each case was the price paid, and the area of land and of foreshore purchased.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The area of land purchased from the Minister of Inverkeithing and Mr. Newton jointly was 6¼ acres. The price, £4,800, was fixed by the Scottish Law Courts. The land was building land and included no foreshore. As regards the rest of the Question, I must refer the hon. Member to my reply to the hon. Member for the Central Division of Edinburgh on 2nd M y.†

The National Income.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state the average annual income of Great Britain and Ireland, respectively, for the years 1820 to 1827 and 1900 to 1907, with the population of the two countries for those years.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) All estimates of national income, in the sense of the total aggregate income of the inhabitants of a country, which I take it is what the hon. Member has in mind, are extremely speculative; and I cannot pretend to give an official estimate even for the later period. As regards the earlier period any calculation would be still more conjectural. The population of Great Britain at the census of 1821 was 14,091,757, and that of Ireland 6,801,827. At the Census of 1901 the population of Great Britain was 36,999,946, and of Ireland 4,458,775.

Tea Exports from Great Britian and India.

MR. R. DUNCAN (Lanarkshire, Govan): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can state the amounts and values of the exports of tea from India and from Great Britain for the last eight years, separately.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The following statements give the information asked for:—

(a) Exports of Tea from British India.

Years commencing 1st April.	Exports from India.	
	Quantity.	Value.
	Lbs.	£
1899 -	178,934,372	6,187,491
1900 -	194,616,477	6,524,585
1901 -	184,247,386	5,576,965
1902 -	185,592,312	5,055,969
1903 -	210,488,197	5,819,670
1904 -	216,608,017	5,773,349
1905 -	219,953,700	6,036,813
1906 -	235,945,410*	6,605,585*

* Exports by sea only, exports by land not yet being available.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clxxiii., 1052–3.

(b) Exports of Tea from the United Kingdom, 1899–1906.

Calendar years.	Quantity.			Value.		
	British East Indian tea.	Other sorts (including Ceylon).	Total.	British East Indian tea.	Other sorts (including Ceylon).	Total.
	Lbs.	Lbs.	Lbs.	£	£	£
1899 -	7,724,262	24,499,943	32,224,205	337,810	1,056,595	1,394,405
1900 -	10,172,949	32,884,935	43,057,884	421,243	1,267,672	1,688,915
1901 -	13,226,910	30,162,608	43,389,518	503,205	1,195,489	1,698,694
1902 -	13,921.510	31,568,080	45,489,590	556,442	1,270,946	1,827,388
1903 -	10,871,086	29,268,985	40,140,071	473,792	1,260,571	1,734,363
1904 -	13,193.677	28,935,329	42,129,006	566,103	1,231,081	1,797,184
1905 -	11,794.309	29,243,322	41,037,631	538,451	1,231,953	1,770,404
1906 -	20,805,526	34,893,907	55,699,433	800,717	1,407,142	2,207,859

Free Distribution of Official Publications to Libraries.

MR. GOOCH (Bath): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury what rules govern the free distribution of official publications to libraries; and whether he will make arrangements by which the British Institute of Social Service may receive such publications as it needs for its library, which is open to the public without fee.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) Parliamentary publications within a limit of £250 per annum are supplied gratuitously to public free libraries which are rate-supported, on application for specific publications. I understand that the British Institute of Social Service is not on this footing. I should perhaps add that such surplus Record Office publications issued prior to 1896 as are still in stock are available for presentation to free libraries and other public institutions.

Excise and Customs Revenue on Liquor and Drugs Consumed in India.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for India why the table of figures showing the net Excise and Customs revenues on liquor and drugs consumed in India, which was formerly printed in the margin of the Annual Statement exhibiting the moral and material progress of India, has not been included in recent issues of that publication; and whether he will give instructions for the inclusion of these figures in tabular form in future volumes.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) In preparing successive issues of this Report it is usual to exercise a certain amount of discretion in the selection of the material. The table referred to was omitted in 1904–5 and subsequent years, as it was not considered essential to the context, and as more accurate figures of the net revenue for a series of years were already given in the "Return of the Net Income and Expenditure of British India under certain specified heads," annually presented to Parliament. As the hon. Member attaches importance to the matter, I will give instructions that comparitive figures of net Excise and Customs revenue for a series of years, taken from the financial Return, are given in the next issue of the Moral and Material Progress Statement.

Frickley Colliery Dispute—Evictions of Families.

MR. HALL (Yorkshire, W.R., Normanton): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been drawn to the fact that the Carlton Main Colliery Company at their Frickley Colliery, Doncaster, where a trade dispute is in existence, evicted several families from their houses on Monday, 24th June, 1907, on account of their being concerned in such dispute; and if he will facilitate legislation with the object of making it impossible for employers of labour to evict men, women, and children from their homes when such disputes are in progress.

MR. JOSEPH WALTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been drawn to the fact that the Carlton Main Colliery Company, at their Frickley Colliery, Doncaster, where a trade dispute is in existence, evicted several families from their houses on Monday, 24th June, 1907, on account of their being concerned in such dispute; and if he will facilitate legislation with the object of making it impossible for employers of labour to evict men, women, and children from their homes when such disputes are in progress.

MR. COMPTON RICKETT (Yorkshire, W.R., Osgoldcross): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been drawn to the fact that the Carlton Main Colliery Company, at their Frickley Colliery, Doncaster, where a trade dispute is in existence, evicted several families from their houses on Monday, 24th June, 1907, on account of their being concerned in such dispute; and if he will facilitate legislation with the object of making it impossible for employers of labour to evict men, women, and children from their homes when such disputes are in progress.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I will answer this and the two following Questions together. I am informed that, on 17th April, a number of men employed at this colliery went on strike, eighteen of whom lived in houses belonging to the company owning the colliery. As these eighteen did not return to work or pay any rent, they were on 3rd May given notice to quit. The notices not being complied with, ejectment orders were obtained and eight men were evicted on 24th June. Of the other ten, some had resumed work, others had left their houses. On the facts before me, I am hardly prepared to say that the men evicted were treated harshly; and, while I shall be happy to consider any proposals that may be laid before me, I am afraid I cannot promise any special facilities for legislation at the present time.

Use of Taximeters by Horse-drawn Cabs.

MR. PIKE PEASE (Darlington): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether representations have been made to him asking that licences should be granted to English taximeter cabs drawn by horses; and, if so, what reply has been made.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) Representations have been received with regard to the use of taximeters by horse-drawn cabs, but they are still under consideration owing to a point of difficulty which has arisen. When the Public Carriage Order was drafted the intention was to enable every cab, whether horse-drawn or motor, to use a taximeter. I was advised that I had power to prescribe a new scale for motor cabs, to which the provisions of the earlier Acts, as preserved by the Public Carriage Act, 1869, were inapplicable, but that I had no power to prescribe a scale for horse-drawn cabs which would conflict with the scale in force before the last-mentioned Act. There is however, a provision in the Hackney Carriage Act of 1831 which enables a cab to be hired by agreement for any sum not in excess of the legal rate; and, in pursuance of this provision, I inserted in the Public Carriage Order Regulation No. 32, which runs as follows: "The proprietor of a horsed hackney carriage may, with the approval of the Commissioner, cause it to be fitted with a taximeter on undertaking that the charges made for the hire of the carriage shall be in accordance with the scale affixed in the carriage and registered by the taximeter, which scale shall not in any case exceed the scale set forth in Schedule I. to this Order." Subject to the conditions of this regulation it is open to the proprietor of every horse-cab to use a taximeter. A difficulty has, however, arisen in connection with such taximeters as have hitherto been presented for the Commissioner's approval under the regulation, and this is now being submitted to the Law Officers; but I may say that the difficulty only relates to taximeters on the horo-kilometrique system—that is, taximeters whose fares are fixed by a combination of time and distance, and would not affect other types of taximeter. Whatever be the advice given by the Law Officers, I hope to introduce legislation next week giving the Home Secretary a general power to fix scales of fares and thus to do away with the inconvenience caused by the confusion of the existing statutes.

Chelmsford Board of Guardians—Censure by Coroner's Jury.

MR. SUMMERBELL (Sunderland): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to a censure passed by a coroner's jury upon the Chelmsford Board of Guardians; and whether he could take any steps to prevent in other cases mischief arising from the mistaken belief of guardians that a man with his throat cut, and not in a position to obtain necessary nursing or medical attendance, though urgently required, may not legally be relieved.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) I am aware of this case, and have communicated with the clerk to the guardians with respect to it. I am informed that the guardians do not entertain the belief referred to in the last part of the Question, and that in the present instance they were sitting on the day when the case occurred, and as soon as they became aware of the facts they at once made an order for the man's admission to the workhouse infirmary. It does not seem necessary that I should take any action in the matter.

Expenditure of Hammersmith Guardians.

MR. SUMMERBELL: To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the last half-yearly returns of expenditure of the guardians of Hammersmith, sent to them by the Poor Law inspector, contained only the items of outdoor relief and indoor maintenance; what were the respective amounts of these items; whether the following items, or any of them, were omitted from such returns, viz.: salaries, rations and superannuation of officers and servants, interest on loans, cost of furniture, repairs to buildings and furniture, and other items of cost of relief of the poor; if so, what was the total amount of expenditure on the omitted items of poor relief; and whether, having regard to the great and increasing cost of indoor relief, he would in future direct that the inspectors' half-yearly returns throughout England and Wales should give the whole cost of poor relief.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) I think my hon. friend is under some misapprehension in this matter. The inspector of the metropolitan district has lately retired, but I understand that he did not send out periodical statements of the expenditure of the boards of guardians in his district. A Parliamentary Return is issued half-yearly by the Local Government Board, which shows the total amount expended by boards of guardians for poor relief, and as regards each union the amount expended on in-maintenance and outdoor relief. This is perhaps the Return which my hon. friend has in mind. The Return is only intended to show the expenditure incurred by each board of guardians in the maintenance of indoor paupers and in outdoor relief, and not to give particulars as to their total expenditure as a Poor Law authority. The latter information is given in the annual Local Taxation Returns. As regards Hammersmith, the expenditure of the guardians during the half-year ended at Michaelmas, 1906, was as follows:—

	£
Maintenance of indoor paupers -	12,613
Outdoor relief - - - - -	3,301
Maintenance of lunatics in asylums, etc. - - -	5,487
Salaries, etc., and superannuation allowances of officers and servants - - - - -	4,589
Principal of loans and interest thereon - - - - -	5,505
Other expenditure wholly connected with the relief of the poor - - - - - -	3,293

These items include, as regards paupers in establishments belonging to the Metropolitan Asylums Board, only in-maintenance expenses. The total contributions by the guardians to the managers during the half-year was £10,404, but it is not practicable to state how much of this amount related exclusively to Poor Law purposes. In addition, a payment of £4,298 was made to the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund during the half-year.

Duties of Sorting Clerks and Telegraphists.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): To ask the Postmaster-General why it was stated by departmental witnesses before the Select Committee of this House that a sorting clerk and telegraphist is rarely left alone in charge of an office, and that the largest number they would have to supervise is never more than three or four, when sorting clerks and telegraphists are frequently responsible for five times that number in several offices in Ireland.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The witness referred to was replying to evidence given by sorting clerks and telegraphists, and his statement that a sorting clerk and telegraphist would not often be left alone for a long time in charge of an office, and in such circumstances would not have more than three or four others to supervise, is substantially correct. It referred, of course, to the number of the indoor staff whom he would supervise. If, however, the hon. Member will specify the offices to which he refers I will have inquiry made and communicate with him further.

Income-tax—Naval and Military Pensions as Earned Incomes.

MR. LUTTRELL (Devonshire, Tavistock): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, before coming to a final decision as to whether naval and military pensions should be treated as earned income, he will take into consideration the facts that retired pay is liable to forfeiture by misconduct and in any case ceases at death, and that a number volunteer and are nominated to war appointments to be taken up on mobilising, and all up to sixty years of age are liable for service in case of war or national emergency, and that these officers have to report yearly as to their physical fitness and willingness to go on active service and cannot leave the United Kingdom without Admiralty permission.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) As I have stated before, I can assure my hon. friend that no aspect of this question shall escape my consideration.

Purchase of the Crookenden Estate, County Cavan.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what is the total amount of the purchase money of the portion of the Crookenden, late Earl of Morley's, estate, in county Cavan agreed to be sold under the Purchase Act, 1903; and what proportion of the estate is not included in the proposals.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners have had this estate inspected with a view to making an offer to purchase it. The estate is a large one, and the inspectors' reports, which are voluminous, are being analysed for the Commissioners' consideration. Until they have fully considered these reports, the Commissioners are not able to say what the amount of the purchase money may be, or what proportion of the estate they may purchase.

Evicted Tenants—Case of William Kennedy.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on the estate of Anne Davey, situate in the parish of Clonsast, barony of Coolestown, King's County, there is an evicted tenant named William Kennedy, who applied to the Estates Commissioners for reinstatement; that the farm from which he was evicted is untenanted and let by the eleven months; and, in view of the fact that the estate is about to be sold to the tenants, can he say what provision is being made for Kennedy.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The present occupier of the holding from which Kennedy was evicted has purchased it under the Land Purchase Acts, and the Estates Commissioners cannot therefore effect Kennedy's restoration to that holding. The Commissioners have, however, placed his name on the list of persons suitable to receive allotments of land if such can be acquired.

Extra Police at Dernaseer, Queen's County.

MR. DELANY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the police who have been recently upon special duty on the farm of Dr. Hogan, at Dernaseer, near Mountrath, Queen's County, were placed there against the will of Dr. Hogan; and, if so, can he say at whose request and for what purpose the extra police were sent into this locality; and whether the local rates will be called upon to bear any portion of the expense.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) No policemen have been stationed on the farm referred to, but for some time police patrols paid special attention to the farm, because there was reason to believe that an attempt would be made to drive the cattle off it. The police so employed belonged to the ordinary local force, and therefore no charge for extra police will fall on the local rates.

Land Purchase Agreement with Hugh Bartley.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that Hugh Bartley, of Ballyminion, county Longford, bought his land out in 1889 at 5s. in the pound reduction, and signed the agreement, upon the Greville property; whether he is aware that the inspector came on the land, and he reduced by £2 15s. out of £7 15s. per annum the instalments; whether he paid a year and a half's interest money on it, and then the agreement was refused, and he cannot get back the money which he paid on the original agreement; and whether this will be ordered to be repaid.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The purchase agreement in this case was dated 25th February, 1891, and the Land Commission, after inspecting the holding, refused the advance applied for on the ground that the security was insufficient. Under the 3rd section of The Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act, 1888, which was then in force, interest was payable from the date on which the advance might be sanctioned to the vendor and not to the Land Commission, as has been the case since the Act of 1896 was passed. The Land Commission, therefore, have no knowledge of any payments which may have been made to the owner, either as rent or interest, under the purchase agreement in question.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

The "Ariadne."

MR. EVERETT (Suffolk, Woodbridge): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty in connection with the case of the ss. "Ariadne," whose perilous position on the dangerous Shipwash sands at 4.30 p.m. on the 19th June was telephoned to the coastguards at Aldeburgh, Suffolk, from the Shipwash light vessel, if he will explain why the chief officer of the coastguards at the Aldeburgh station, Suffolk, kept secret the telephone message, and did not post it up in the usual way on the station; and why this officer forbade his men to give this information to the lifeboat men, who, acting on a rumour about five hours later that night, launched their lifeboat to the steamer, and lay alongside till 4.30 p.m. the next afternoon, when the steamer floated.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): The coastguard watchman telephoned to the Shipwash light vessel to ask if the steamer required anything. The master of the Shipwash light vessel replied that the steamer had touched forward, that three tugs were standing by her, but that the steamer did not require their assistance and that she had no distress signals hoisted. The master of the light vessel also asked the coastguard watchman not to report to the lifeboat authorities, as he (the master of the light vessel) had strict orders not to call the lifeboat out unless she was actually required. The coastguard watchman reported accordingly to his chief officer, and in these circumstances the latter did not consider any further steps necessary and did not post up any notice. The crew were not forbidden to give information to the lifeboat authorities.

H.M.S. Collingwood.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, College): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, if the war vessel "Collingwood," at present lying in the Kyles of Bute, is to be offered for sale at an early date; if so, will he say what price she originally cost and when she was built; whether she is to be sold with the condition that she must be broken up; and whether, in view of the fact that new war vessels are permitted to be sold abroad, he will make an effort to sell this vessel without the breaking-up condition, and thus ensure a considerable saving.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The "Collingwood," which was completed in 1886 at a cost of about £746,000, will be sold by auction at Portsmouth on the 9th July. As she is an armoured vessel, it is not considered practicable to offer her for sale without the breaking-up condition.

Coastguard and the Life-Saving Service.

MAJOR SEELY (Liverpool, Abercromby): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, in view of the fact that His Majesty's Coastguard perform many functions which can best be discharged by men of the Royal Navy, especially life-saving services, he can give an assurance that the present system shall be maintained, such proportion of the cost of the coastguard being charged to the Board of Trade Vote as may be considered reasonable in consideration of services rendered by the coastguard not of a naval character.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: As the whole subject is now under consideration, it is impossible to give any assurance as to the result, but in the event of the present system being retained, I will make a note of my hon. friend's suggestion.

MAJOR SEELY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty when the Report of the inter-Departmental Committee on His Majesty's Coastguard will be laid upon the Table of this House.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The Report is being considered by the Admiralty, and has been referred to other Departments concerned. It is quite premature till these discussions are concluded to give any undertaking such as is suggested in the Question.

MAJOR SEELY asked whether, in view of the promises of his right hon. friend, this Report would be laid before the rising of Parliament.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I cannot give any pledge.

MAJOR SEELY: But you gave a promise.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he did not remember the promises, but if they had been made they would be kept.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.) asked whether it might be assumed that no further action would be taken in regard to closing Coastguard stations until the Report was laid.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I have promised that many times.

Strength of Fleets.

MR. COWAN (Surrey, Guildford): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty when the Return giving the strength of Fleets of Great Britain and foreign countries, which was issued last year on 22nd May, will be delivered at the Vote Office.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The Return was delivered yesterday.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): Having seen this Report I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman if he considers that it carries out the spirit and letter of his promise.

*MR. SPEAKER: That hardly arises out of the Question when the Report will be laid. The hon. Member had better give notice.

Battleship Construction.

SIR BERKELEY SHEFFIELD (Lincolnshire, Brigg): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether it is the intention to complete the battleship laid down this year at Elswick in twenty-four months from the date of laying down; and whether this policy will be continued in all future ships.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The Answer to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative; and as regards the second part, it is impossible to give any such pledge as that suggested.

Loan of Dredgers to the Egyptian Government.

MR. BELLAIRS: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty for how long the two dredgers which were lent to the Egyptian Government two years ago, in May and July, 1905, respectively, are to remain at the disposal of that Government; whether Treasury sanction had been obtained for this transaction; and whether any payment is being made by the Egyptian Government for the value of the services rendered by the two dredgers.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: One of the dredgers sailed on the 22nd ult. on her way home. It is proposed to sell the other to the Egyptian Government. The Answer to the second Question is in the affirmative, and to the third Question in the negative.

Tidworth Stables.

CAPTAIN FABER (Hampshire, Andover): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the stables for the Scots Greys at Tidworth have yet been commenced; if not, will he say why; and whether he can now name a definite date for their commencement.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): Building operations have not yet been commenced, but the work in preparing plans, specifications, and quantities is sufficiently advanced to render it possible to call for tenders in a few days time. Until the tenders are received a date cannot be fixed for the commencement of the work.

CAPTAIN FABER: Was there ever any intention of building these stables?

[No Answer was returned.]

Woolwich Discharges.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in considering any future discharges of men in the Ordnance Factory at Woolwich, he will have special regard to the number of women and children dependent on the men it is proposed to discharge.

MR. HALDANE: As I have already informed the hon. Member on the 26th ultimo, in Answer to a somewhat similar Question, every regard is paid, when selecting men for discharge, to all the circumstances of each man's case, including any points concerning his family he may put forward.

Army Expenditure Returns.

MR. COWAN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War when he proposes to issue the Return ordered by the House on 12th March, giving, under different headings of Army Expenditure, the relative amounts devoted to the expeditionary force and immobile defences, such as coast protection.

MR. HALDANE: This Return, which involves an immense amount of clerical labour, is in course of preparation. I regret that I cannot at present name a date for its issue.

Kilcreggan War Office Lands.

MR. WATT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War at what date the purchase was effected of the land at Kilcreggan, bought for £14,500; and what is the amount of money since expended on works.

MR. HALDANE: As I informed my hon. friend on the 29th ultimo, the purchase was concluded in October, 1901; the amount of money expended on the construction of Portkil Battery since that date is approximately £19,560.

Lala Lajpat Rai.

SIR H. COTTON (Nottingham, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether Lala Lajpat Rai during the course of his public career in India, extending over a period of twenty years, has ever been implicated in seditious or anti-British propaganda; and whether he has had laid before him and is able to indicate any speech or utterance or action by Lala Lajpat Rai at any time which could in any way be considered to transgress the limits of legitimate and constitutional agitation.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. MORLEY, Montrose Burghs): Yes, I have seen public utterances of Lajpat Rai within the last two years which, as reported, are distinctly and strongly of the nature of anti-British propaganda, and can have no other meaning whatever. If the hon. Member will read Lajpat Rai's Lahore speech quoted in the *Wafadar* of 28th January, 1906, or his speech at Lyallpur reported in the *Punjabee* of 27th March, 1907, he will find language which I cannot think that the hon. Member, who was engaged for so many years in working the Indian system of Government, will consider as within the limits of constitutional agitation in India. These speeches, I will repeat, are not the only grounds or information for resort to the Law of 1818.

MR. BELLOC (Salford, S.) asked whether the speeches to which the right hon. Gentleman alluded would give ground for a prosecution in a Court of Justice.

MR. MORLEY: Yes, I am told that they would.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) asked why they were not submitted to a Court of Justice.

MR. MORLEY: Because, as I have already more than once explained, there is other information which it is against the public interest, at this moment at all events, to disclose.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) asked the right hon. Gentleman whether the Law of 1818 was not merely an Ordinance of the self-constituted council of the old East India Company, which had never been sanctioned by that House.

MR. MORLEY said he would not argue with his hon. friend, but it was the law of the land in India. He dared say it was not sanctioned by that House, but that was another question. It was the law of the land in India.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: And a very bad one.

MR. MYER (Lambeth, N.): Has the attention of the right hon. Gentleman been called to the utterance of a man named Hyndman, in which he says the trouble among the Indian people is solely due to our system of Government?

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member must give notice of that Question.

Whipping in India.

SIR H. COTTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that flogging is administered in India as a judicial punishment in many thousands of cases every year in public, and on the bare buttock; that the triangles on which men are tied up are placed outside every magistrate's court in India, and that in Ceylon these public floggings have been prohibited by the Secretary of State for the Colonies; and whether he will take immediate steps to reduce the prevalence of flogging in India as a judicial punishment.

MR. MORLEY: I am aware that whipping is ordered as a judicial punishment in India in some thousands of cases yearly; but I may point out that in several provinces the sentence is not carried out publicly, nor is the whipping always inflicted in the manner described. As I have more than once stated, the whole subject is now under my consideration.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL asked if it were not a fact that these public whippings were exclusively confined to natives and were never administered to white men.

MR. MORLEY: Yes, Sir.

Indian Political Prisoners.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he will state the names of all those recently arrested and deported without trial in India, giving the dates of arrest, the places of confinement, and the treatment accorded to each prisoner; and whether the friends of the prisoners are allowed to communicate with them or their relatives to see them at any time.

MR. MORLEY: Only two persons, namely, Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh, have been recently dealt with under Regulation III. of 1818. The former was arrested on the 9th May, the latter on the 2nd June. As stated in my Answer to the hon. Member on the 18th June, they are confined at Mandalay, where they are lodged in suitable houses within the Fort, receiving allowances for maintenance suited to their condition in life. I am inquiring how far they are permitted to see or communicate with their friends.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I will repeat the Question next week.

British Steamship Communication with East Africa.

MR. EVELYN CECIL (Aston Manor): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in view of the discussions at the Colonial Conference and of the Report of the Steamship Subsidies Committee in 1902, His Majesty's Government can see their way to improve the direct British steamship communication to East Africa.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): As I informed the hon. Member for the Montgomery District on 29th May, this matter has been and will be carefully considered by His Majesty's Government, but I am not able to make any statement on the subject at present.

Sir Eldon Gorst's Pension.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Sir Eldon Gorst is still in receipt of the pension of £500 a year granted to him by the Egyptian Government.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): The pension from the Egyptian Government will not be drawn while Sir Eldon Gorst occupies the position of Consul-General at Cairo.

The Ethiopian Railway.

MR. BOTTOMLEY (Hackney, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what steps he proposes to take to protect British investors in the Ethiopian Railway Company; whether all idea of connecting Diré-Daouah with Harrar and Addis-Ababa by rail has been abandoned; what steps have been taken for the construction of railways west of Addis-Ababa; and whether the Emperor Menelek has been, or will be, approached with a view to his concurrence in the Tripartite Agreement of December, 1906.

SIR EDWARD GREY: The Ethiopian Railway Company is a French concern and the treatment of its shareholders is entirely a matter for the French Government and the French courts, in which His Majesty's Government could not usefully intervene and would have no reasons for doing so as long as British investors receive the same treatment as French. The Answer to the second part of the Question is in the negative. As regards the third part of the Question, no steps have as yet been taken for the construction of railways west of Adis Ababa. The Tripartite Agreement of 1906 has been communicated to the Emperor Menelek. The concurrence of the Emperor Menelek was not required for the Tripartite Agreement, which was binding upon the three Powers who signed it. It was communicated to the Emperor Menelek in order that he might be assured that there was nothing in it prejudicial to his interests or to his sovereign rights, and he raised no objection to it. I have no reason whatever to suppose that the French Government will differentiate in the treatment of British and French subjects who are interested in the concession.

MR. BOTTOMLEY asked the right hon. Gentleman if he had any reason to believe that the company had been formed for the express purpose of getting rid of British investors and substituting French investors and French influence; and was there the remotest prospect of the concurrence of the Emperor Menelek in the Tripartite Agreement.

SIR EDWARD GREY: His concurrence is not necessary. The Agreement was simply sent to him to show there was nothing in it to which he could object. As regards the first part of the Question I have no reason to suppose there will be any differentiation between British and French investors.

Mr. Abbott's Ransom.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrews Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any reply has yet been received from the Turkish Government to the demand for the repayment of the ransom for Mr. Abbott, who was recently captured by brigands near Salonica.

SIR EDWARD GREY: The Answer is in the negative.

Case of the "Knight Commander."

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any reply has been received from the Russian Government regarding compensation for the loss of the s.s. "Knight Commander"; and whether similar German claims have been settled.

SIR EDWARD GREY: The Russian Government have not yet replied to the proposal of His Majesty's Government that the case of the "Knight Commander" should be submitted to arbitration. The circumstances of the case of the "Knight Commander" cannot be said to be similar to that of the German vessels. In the case of the British vessel the Supreme Admiralty Council at St. Petersburg held the vessel and most of her cargo to be good prize. In the German cases the confiscation was not upheld by the Court and consequently compensation was awarded in respect of both ships and cargo.

Galapagos Islands.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has any further information regarding the British subjects kept in servitude on the Galapagos Islands; whether some of them were kept in irons while there; and whether he can state what steps are being taken to release these people from their miserable condition.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I have no further information beyond the Report by the commander of the "Shearwater" alluded to in my Answer to the hon. Member for Mid. Armagh on the 17th ultimo.† Five men stated that they had been put in irons, but this was denied by the working manager of the company to whose notice the matter was brought by the commander. The only case which the manager has admitted was that of a labourer who had committed a theft and who was punished by the Governor's orders by being placed in irons. It does not appear that any men were in irons at the time of the visit, and there is no reason to suppose that they are so now. His Majesty's Government have made representations to the Ecuadorian Government, and they have instructed His Majesty's Consul at Guayaquil to go to the Island by the next opportunity, and arrange that the men should be free to leave, if they desire to do so.

Lord Cromer and Egyptian Administration.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any measure is in contemplation to give effect to the opinion Lord Cromer has expressed in his despatch of 8th March (Egypt, No. 3, 1907) in favour of some steps being taken in the direction of the introduction of full Parliamentary institutions in Egypt.

SIR EDWARD GREY: Lord Cromer's observation on this point in the despatch referred to is as follows—

> "I think it would be altogether premature to take any decisive and rapid steps in the direction of the introduction of full Parliamentary institutions in Egypt."

I am not in a position to make any further statement than Lord Cromer has made in this and in his last annual Report.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Why not introduce a Coptic Council with the assistance of Lord Dunraven?

Egyptian Postmaster-General.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Borton Bey, who, on the retirement of Laba Pasha, a native, has been appointed Postmaster-General of Egypt, has had only two years experience of postal administration; whether the British Consul-General has in this case departed from the policy laid down by Lord Cromer in his Report for 1906, of appointing competent natives to the higher administrative posts, provided that experiments of that kind already made should be successful; and whether it is in consequence of the failure of such experiments that an Englishman has in this instance been substituted for a native.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clxxvi., 155–6.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I have no information on the point raised by the hon. Member, but I will inquire.

Egyptian General Assembly.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, seeing that Lord Cromer, in his despatch of 8th March (Egypt, No. 3, 1907) complained that many of the eighty-five proposals laid before the Egyptian General Assembly were discussed in a very perfunctory manner, and that it was impossible in the space of three days to discuss them adequately, he will state upon whose initiative, and upon what grounds, the session of the Assembly was thus curtailed; and whether he will advise the Egyptian Government that in future the General Assembly should meet annually instead of, as at present, once in two years, and should be allowed sufficient time to deliberate on the proposals laid before it.

SIR EDWARD GREY: With regard to the first part of the hon. Member's Question I have no information, but will inquire. I am not at present aware of any reason for altering the regulations respecting the meeting of the Assembly, about which, so far as I know, no complaint has been made.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Will the right hon. Gentleman inquire by telegraph?

SIR EDWARD GREY replied in the negative.

Armenian Villages in the Plain of Mush.

MR. GOOCH (Bath): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has any information in reference to the pillaging of Suluk and other Armenian villages in the plain of Mush by the Turks; and whether he will direct His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople to make representations, with a view of preventing similar occurrences.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I have received no information with regard to the village named, but His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople has recently made representations to the Turkish Government respecting the condition of the Armenian villages in the plain of Mush, and His Majesty's Vice Consul at Van has been instructed to make a tour in the district.

The Gold Reserve.

MR. CHIOZZA MONEY (Paddington, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is now in a position to make any further statement with regard to the question of increasing the national gold reserve.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.): No, Sir. I am awaiting the outcome of the deliberations of the various interests primarily concerned, and I am still not without hope that an agreement may be arrived at without intervention on my part.

Probate.

MR. WATT: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will extend the limit up to which probate or letters of administration can be obtained from local revenue officials from £500 to £1,000.

MR. ASQUITH: The adoption of this suggestion would increase the cases dealt with by revenue officials by 50 per cent. in number, and by still more in complexity, and the Board of Inland Revenue do not consider that any but the most simple cases should be disposed of by others than experts. I am therefore not prepared to recommend any extension of the present limit.

Post Office Savings Bank Securities.

MR. SWIFT MACNIELL: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will state what, on the 31st December, 1906, was the total value, taken at the market prices of the day, of the securities held against the deposits in the Post Office Savings Bank; whether, having regard to the opinion constantly expressed by competent authorities that the stock of gold held by the Bank of England and other banks is insufficient, he will confer with the banks as to the taking of measures to increase the amount; and will he, as a preliminary step to instituting such a conference, or otherwise, establish a gold reserve to be held against the sums due to depositors in the Post Office Savings Bank.

MR. ASQUITH: The Select Committee of 1902 on the Savings Banks Funds recommended the discontinuance of the practice of publishing a valuation of the assets of these funds at the current market price, on the ground that the results of such a valuation were misleading. Effect was given to that recommendation by the Savings Banks Act, 1904, which directed that, instead of the market-price valuation, there should be published every year a statement of the nature and amount of the securities held by the National Debt Commissioners. This course has since been followed, and I fear that I should be defeating the intention of the Act if I were now to make a valuation of the securities at market price. The question of banking reserves has engaged my attention, and it has also, as I understand, been the subject of considerable discussion among bankers. I do not think that such a conference as my hon. friend suggests would be a desirable step at present; nor can I admit that the Post Office Savings Bank is at all on the same footing as the commercial banks in regard to a gold reserve.

Dudley Bathing Conviction.

MR. CHIOZZA MONEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can now state what steps he has taken in the matter of the Dudley justices who recently sent little boys to prison for bathing without bathing-drawers.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): I have made further inquiry and I am informed that the justices issued the commitments in the hope of enforcing the fines, and not with any intention of actually sending the children to prison. It is much to be regretted, I think, that greater care was not taken to prevent the commitments, if it was right to issue them at all, from being executed; but having discharged the boys from prison, I have no power to interfere further in the matter. I do not think such an incident is likely to recur.

Tea Exports.

MR. R. DUNCAN (Lanarkshire, Govan): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can state the amounts and values of the exports of tea from India and from Great Britain for the last eight years, separately.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): I will have the information asked for printed in the Votes.†

MR. DUNCAN: Were the exports smaller or larger before 1903.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The figures will show.

Coastguard and the Rocket Apparatus.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade what steps he intends to take to keep the rocket apparatus at those stations from which the coastguards have been removed in as efficient a state as it was before their removal; or whether it is intended to leave any of those stations without rocket apparatus.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: At stations from which the coastguard has been removed, arrangements have been made with a view to keeping the rocket life-saving service in as efficient a state as heretofore. The apparatus will in most cases be in charge either of a pensioned coastguard or of a capable civilian, but in some instances it will be worked by the coastguard from a flank station. It is not intended to leave any of the stations without rocket apparatus.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): Will this new service involve any addition to the Board of Trade Vote?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE thought there would not be any increase in the Vote for this service this year.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN asked whether the right hon. Gentleman had satisfied himself that where the apparatus was to be worked from flank stations no loss of life would result from delay.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE agreed that that was a very important matter, which he would certainly bear in mind. He understood that at the present moment the arrangements were very effective in the flank stations.

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† See page 508.

Longniddry Railway Station.

MR. J. HOPE (Fifeshire, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware of the dangerous condition of the North British Railway station at Longniddry; whether he will compel the railway company to discontinue the practice of stopping their passenger trains twice at the south platform, owing to the length of the platform being less than the length of the trains; and whether he will instruct the railway company to make the necessary alterations for the protection of passengers.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I have communicated with the railway company, who deny that this station is in any way in a dangerous condition, or that any risk arises from its use in connection with their passenger service or otherwise. The company add that the expense involved has hitherto prevented them from improving the accommodation at the station, but that the question of so doing shall be fully considered at an early meeting of the directors.

Sewers and Income-tax.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Glamorganshire, Rhondda): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if his attention has been called to a decision given by the House of Lords on Wednesday last in the case of Ystradyfodwg and Pontypridd Board and Benstead, to the effect that sewers vested in local authorities, and maintained by them pursuant to duties imposed upon them by the Public Health Acts are assessable to the income-tax; if he can give some idea as to the total annual value of all sewers in the United Kingdom, and of the burden which will now be placed on all ratepayers in respect of the income-tax assessed upon their public sewers, irrespective of the amount of the incomes of such ratepayers; and whether he will consider the advisability of introducing legislation to relieve the ratepayers of this income-tax burden now placed upon them for the first time since the income-tax has existed in this country.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): I have drawn the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to this matter. I understand that it is receiving his consideration, and that if my hon. friend will put a Question to him on the subject in about a week's time, he will do his best to answer it.

Poor Law Statistics.

MR. A. L. STANLEY (Cheshire, Eddisbury): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can state the total number of inmates, excluding casuals and insane, of workhouses and other institutions in which paupers are received in England and Wales on the 1st January, 1907, together with the number and percentage of this total who were under and above the age of sixteen years, respectively, distinguishing, as regards those above the age of sixteen years, the number and percentage of those who were not able-bodied or infirm; and whether he can give any information as to the number who were sixty-five years of age or upwards.

MR. JOHN BURNS: The total number of inmates of the institutions mentioned in the Question was on the 1st January, 1907, excluding the casuals and insane, 248,945. Of these 60,421, or 24·3 per cent, were under sixteen, and 188,524, or 75·7 per cent., were sixteen or over that age. Of the latter number 136,663, or 72·5 per cent., were classed as not able-bodied or infirm. This leaves 51,861 classed as able-bodied, but of these 31,556 were sick or temporarily disabled. Thus the total number of able-bodied inmates in health was only 20,305, of whom 11,508 were men and 8,797 women. The Returns from which these figures are taken do not distinguish the number of paupers who are sixty-five years of age or upwards. The most recent information on this subject relates to the 1st September, 1903. On that date the number of indoor paupers of sixty-five or upwards (exclusive of vagrants) was 75,214, or 47·1 per cent. of the total number of inmates of sixteen years of age and over.

Low Valley Roman Catholic School.

LORD EDMUND TALBOT (Sussex, Chichester): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he is aware that in January, 1906, public notice was given of the intention of the promoters to provide a new Roman Catholic school at Low Valley, to replace the school struck off the grant list in September, 1905, that the inquiry under Section 9 of the Act, 1902, was not held till July, 1906, and that the decision of the Board of Education, as a result of the inquiry, was not announced till April, 1907; and what is the explanation of this delay of nearly fifteen months, seeing that the law is to the effect that the Board of Education should act without unnecessary delay.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. McKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): I regret the delay which occurred in arriving at a decision in this case. In view of the fundamental changes in the organisation of elementary education which would have taken place if the Bill of last session had become law, it was found impossible to determine the questions at issue while that Bill was under the consideration of Parliament. Some further delay arose owing to the change in the office of President of the Board.

MR. BELLOC: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he is aware that the Catholic school at Low Valley has been declared unnecessary, although there is no school accommodation for the children in the neighbourhood; whether he is aware that the parents of the children, for the most part working men, have maintained the school at their own expense for close upon two years rather than sacrifice the religious and secular education of their children; and what course he proposes in redress of this undoubted grievance.

MR. McKENNA: The school accommodation in the neighbourhood appears to be sufficient in quantity, but the buildings are unsatisfactory. The local education authority are taking steps to provide a new school which will meet all the requirements of the district, and I am urging upon them the need for all possible expedition.

LORD EDMUND TALBOT (Sussex, Chichester): Is the right hon. Gentleman satisfied that the local education authority have acquired a site for the school?

MR. McKENNA: I am in communication with a member of the authority who is also a Member of this House, and will ascertain that.

LORD R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.): How was it the school was declared unnecessary, when there was no accommodation?

MR. McKENNA: There was existing accommodation, but not of a very excellent kind.

Cloonacuna Cattle Raid.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a cattle raid was made on the Cloonacuna farm, near Ballina, on Saturday night; whether this is the second incident of the kind on this farm within a few weeks; and, if so, why was it not prevented by the police.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): The police have been informed that cattle were driven off Mr. Peter Kelly's farm at the place named on the night of the 22nd ult. Two police patrols had visited the farm at different times on that night, and had found the cattle safe on each occasion. It is stated that the cattle were also driven off about six weeks before. There is no evidence to show how or by whom the cattle were removed on either occasion.

Miltown Malbay Evicted Tenants.

MR. HALPIN (Clare, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will inquire of the Estates Commissioners the reason the four evicted tenants on Mrs. Moroney's property, Miltown Malbay, are not reinstated, notwithstanding that the inspector visited the farms five months ago?

MR. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners have received applications for reinstatement from nine persons who state they were evicted from the estate mentioned in the Question. If the hon. Member will give the names of the four persons to whom he refers, the Commissioners will be prepared to say how their applications have been dealt with.

MR. MOORE (Armagh, N.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware of the anxiety felt by Irish evicted tenants as to whether they are included in the 2,000 to be reinstated, or whether they are among the excluded 6,000? Will he not consider the desirability of publishing the names of the 2,000?

MR. BIRRELL: I will consider that.

Herbertstown Evicted Tenant.

CAPTAIN CRAIG (Down, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether a grant in money or kind was made to a man named M'Grath, of Herbertstown, county Limerick, by the Estates Commissioners; and, if so, how much.

MR. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners have sanctioned a grant of £135 to Thomas McGrath, in order to provide him with stock and buildings for a holding which he has purchased under Section 2 (1) (*d*) of the Act of 1903.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that this tenant, after having purchased cattle with this money, sold them again and used the money to pay off debts contracted prior to his reinstatement?

MR. BIRRELL: I have no information on the subject.

MR. LUNDON (Limerick, E.): It is a misrepresentation.

MR. CONOR O'KELLY (Mayo, N.): Will the hon. and gallant Member repeat the statement outside this House? We can then carry the matter further.

Cost of Reinstating Evicted Tenants.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state approximately the cost of reinstating the 2,000 evicted tenants under the Bill he has introduced.

MR. BIRRELL: I am not at present in a position to make a statement on this subject. I must ask the hon. and gallant Member to await the discussion on the Evicted Tenants Bill.

Firearm Outrages.

MR. HADDOCK (Lancashire, North Lonsdale): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the assault with firearms upon the house of Mr. Donohue, at Killafin, in the Gort district, upon Saturday night, the 22nd instant; whether any motive is attributed by the owner for the outrage; and whether any arrests have been made.

I beg also to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on Sunday night, 23rd June, the residence of Mr. Blake, at Hollypark, in the Athenry district, was fired into; whether any arrests have been made; and whether Mr. Blake can assign any motive for this outrage.

I beg further to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether official information has reached him of an assault with firearms upon a police station at Knockadorive, county Kerry; whether any arrests have yet been made for this and for the moonlighting outrages committed in this district a few months ago; and what motives are alleged to have been the cause of all these disturbances.

MR. BIRRELL: I beg to refer to my Answers to three similar Questions which were put yesterday by the hon. Member for Mid. Armagh.† No arrests have been made. I have no information as to the motives of the offenders.

Untenanted Lands.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the total acreage of the untenanted land which the owners who have been approached, under Regulation V. of the Regulations of the 13th February, 1906, have intimated their willingness to sell to the Estates Commissioners for the reinstatement of evicted tenants.

MR. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners inform me that 271 of the owners who have been approached under Regulation V. of the Regulations of 13th February, 1906, have intimated their willingness to sell lands to the Estates Commissioners, but of these only 160 have furnished particulars of the lands they are willing to sell, which lands comprise an area of 57,814 acres. In ten of these 160 cases in which the Commissioners have estimated the prices the owners have replied that they are willing to sell the lands, comprising 4,846 acres, at the estimated prices.

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† See page 370.

Cattle Mutilation at Athenry.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the constabulary at Athenry have been informed that an act of cattle mutilation has been perpetrated on the farm of Patrick Mitchell at Carnakilly; and whether any arrests have been made.

MR. BIRRELL: On the morning of 27th June the police at Athenry were informed that a small portion of the tails of two of Mr. Mitchell's cattle had been cut off during the previous night. The police at once visited the place and investigated the matter, but have not succeeded in discovering the offender.

Killine Disturbances.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the evidence given at Galway quarter sessions on Tuesday, when application was made for permission to serve processes for rent by post in consequence of the threatening attitude of the people of Killine towards the process server of the Court; and what steps he proposes to take to protect the officers of the law in the execution of their duty.

MR. BIRRELL: My attention has been called to the proceedings referred to in the Question. The police always afford full protection to process servers in the execution of their duty. In this particular case the process server is stated to have made two attempts to serve processes for rent. On the first occassion he made no application for protection; on the contrary, he told a policeman, who happened to meet him, that he required no assistance. On the next day he informed the police that he would make no further attempt to serve the processes, but notwithstanding this statement he made a further attempt on the following day, without asking for protection or even informing the police of his intention.

Tullamore Post Office.

MR. HAVILAND BURKE (King's County, Tullamore): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the fact that there is an abundance of building material in the neighbourhood of Tullamore, he will use his influence to secure that, wherever possible, none but Irish materials should be specified for or employed in the building of the new Tullamore post office.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): The matter referred to concerns the Board of Public Works rather than the Post Office. I will ask that Department to consider how far it is possible to give effect to the hon. Member's wishes without increasing the cost of the work.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Is it proposed to introduce a system of preferential protection in regard to Post Office contracts?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I have said local materials will be used if it can be done without increasing the cost.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The right hon. Gentleman intends to give preference to local material?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: When it is adapted for the work, I should think it would be an advantage to use it.

Lord Cromer.

MR. KETTLE (Tyrone, E.): I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether the proposed Vote of £50,000 to Lord Cromer for his services in Egypt will be submitted to the House by way of Resolution, and, if so, is he able to announce the terms of the Resolution and the date on which it will be introduced.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): Any step which may be taken must originate with a message from the Crown, and until such a message is received it would be premature and improper to make any statement.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to give notice that, if the unprecedented course is taken of giving Lord Cromer a money reward for services for which he has already been well paid, I shall oppose the Resolution.

The New Peerages.

MR. R. DUNCAN asked the Prime Minister whether all the new Peerages, or any of them, were to be hereditary.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: They are of the usual sort.

MR. R. DUNCAN: I thought there were Peerages of both sorts.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London) asked the Prime Minister whether the usual facilities would be given for the discussion of the Motion in reference to the attitude of the Government towards the Colonial Conference which stood on the Paper in the name of his right hon. friend the Member for St. George's, Hanover Square.† He also desired to know what Irish Votes were to be taken in Committee of Supply on Thursday, and what was the business for Friday.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said that of course the Government were ready to assign a day for the discussion of the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's. He hoped to be able on Thursday to fix the day, when he made his promised statement in regard to the business of next week, and not as to business generally as had been suggested by some of their instructors in the Press. He had not got so far as that. On Thursday the Vote for University education in Ireland would be taken, and on Friday the finances of the Irish Land Act would be discussed on a Motion which the hon. Gentleman the Member for Waterford had placed on the Paper.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had added the following Member to Standing Committee A: Earl of Ronaldshay.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee; That they had discharged the following Member from Standing Committee A (in respect of the Petty Sessions Clerks (Ireland) Bill): Mr. Attorney-General; and had appointed in substitution (in respect of the Petty Sessions Clerks (Ireland) Bill): Mr. Solicitor-General for Ireland.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee; That they had added to Standing Committee A the following fifteen Members (in respect of the Petty Sessions Clerks (Ireland) Bill): Mr. Sloan, Mr. Wolff, Mr. Hugh Barrie, Mr. Crean, Mr. Flynn, Mr. Liddell, Mr. O'Shee, Mr. Reddy, Mr. Power, Mr. Farrell, Mr. Glendinning, Mr. Sheehan, Mr. Moore, Mr. Harrington, and Mr. Ffrench.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee; That they had discharged the following Members from Standing Committee B (in respect of the Telegraph (Money) Bill and of the Evidence (Colonial Statutes) Bill): Mr. Burns, Dr. Macnamara, and Mr. Solicitor-General; and had appointed in substitution (in respect of the Telegraph (Money) Bill and of the Evidence (Colonial Statutes) Bill): Mr. Buxton, Mr. Runciman, and Mr. Churchill.

SIR WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee; That they had added to Standing Committee B the following fourteen Members (in respect of the Telegraph (Money) Bill and of the Evidence (Colonial Statutes) Bill): Mr. William Redmond, Mr. Smyth, Mr. Gibbs, Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Mr. Meysey-Thompson, Mr. John Rutherford, Mr. Steadman, Mr. Hamar Greenwood, Mr. Lyulph Stanley, Mr Harold Cox, Mr. Chiozza Money, Mr Marnham, Mr. Bennett, and Sir Frank Edwards.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

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† Colonial Preference.—That this House regrets that His Majesty's Government have declined the invitation unanimously preferred by the Prime Ministers of the Self-Governing Colonies to consider favourably any form of Colonial Preference or any measures for closer commercial union of the Empire on a preferential basis.

FINANCE BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

Clauses 5 and 6 agreed to.

Clause 7:—

*MR. H. H. MARKS (Kent, Thanet) moved to amend the clause by extending the composition for stamp duty under the Stamp Act of 1891 "to policies of insurance or indemnity against liability incurred by employers in consequence of claims made upon them by workmen who have sustained personal injury." His object was, he said, to give to the Commissioners of Inland Revenue the same power of accepting composition for stamp duty on employers' liability policies as they had in the case of other accident policies. The Workmen's Compensation Act had largely increased this class of insurance, and the question was one, therefore, of wide interest. The state of the law on the matter was not altogether clear. In 1898 it was decided by the Courts that contracts to indemnify against employers' liability were not policies of insurance against accident within the meaning of Section 98 of the Stamp Act of 1891, and it was held, therefore, that they were subject to an agreement stamp of 6d. instead of the 1d. stamp of a policy. The Finance Act of 1899 by Section 11 provided that the provisions contained in Section 98 of the Stamp Act of 1891 in reference to the expression "policy of insurance against accidents" should extend to and include policies of insurance or indemnity against the liability incurred by employers in consequence of claims made upon them by workmen who had sustained personal injury, when the annual premium on such policies did not exceed £1. It seemed, therefore that these policies were not generally within Section 98, and even if the power of composition for the stamp duties, which was given Section 116, did apply to these policies when the premium was not over £1, it did not apply to policies where a higher premium was paid. His point was that if the companies could compound for small policies they ought to be allowed to compound for larger ones, and his desire was to put insurance under the Workmen's Compensation Act on a level with insurances against other forms of accident.

Amendment proposed—

> "In page 3, line 21, after the word 'property,' to insert the words 'to policies of insurance or indemnity against liability incurred by employers in consequence of claims made upon them by workmen who have sustained personal injury.'"—(*Mr. H. H. Marks.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.) said the Amendment would not give effect to the intention. At present a policy of insurance against employers' liability upon which the premium did not exceed £1 was subject to a penny stamp, and was therefore within the composition clause; but when the premium exceeded £1 the policy did not come within the ambit of the clause, and would not do so without an Amendment of the Stamp Act itself, which the hon. Member had not proposed. That, however, was a technical objection. On the merits of the case he confessed he saw no reason for extending the law beyond its present scope. A policy on which the premium was £1 would insure an employer against all contingencies of injury to six servants, and this more than covered an ordinary household. Why should a policy on which the premium exceeded £1, and which was intended to apply to cases where there were more than six servants, enjoy special privileges He quite agreed it was right in regard to the smaller policies, but he saw no reason for extending the scope of that provision.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.) thought the right hon. Gentleman would agree that when the State imposed the obligation under the Employers' Liability Act which necessitated the taking out of a policy of insurance by A for the benefit of B, C and D—such policy being in fact the only security that B, C, and D would enjoy that which Parliament intended for them—no obstacle should stand in the way of the discharge of that obligation, but that on the contrary everything possible should be done to lighten A's task as far as possible. No doubt where the premium was large the stamp duty was material. It was true that for domestic servants the premium was small, but to cover casual employment such as the charwoman and the window cleaner a minimum premium was required bringing the amount beyond £1. He had recently made an insurance of this nature.

MR. ASQUITH: Not costing more than £1 annual premium?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said his impression was that it was more, and that the reason was that he expressly provided that the policy should cover the case of people called in to clean windows—a much more dangerous employment than ordinary domestic service.

MR. ASQUITH said that was an interesting question, no doubt, but the clause only applied to policies issued by newspapers. If, however, the hon. Member for Thanet would withdraw his Amendment the question might at a later stage be raised in the larger form.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Will the right hon. Gentleman himself undertake to consider this question on the ground of public policy? We have passed an Act of Parliament which is intended to confer certain rights upon employees, the great bulk of whom are in the service of small employers and therefore cannot be assured of the benefits which Parliament intended to give them unless the employer does insure.

MR. ASQUITH: I will consider it, but I cannot pledge myself what the result of the consideration will be.

*MR. H. H. MARKS: In view of the promise of the right hon. Gentleman, I ask leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 8:—

MR. HARMOOD-BANNER (Liverpool, Everton) moved an Amendment to permit proxies executed abroad, and allowed by this clause to be stamped in this country after execution, to be stamped by any person with an adhesive stamp within thirty days after it has been received in the United Kingdom. He thanked the Chancellor of the Exchequer for bringing in the clause, which would be of considerable advantage to shareholders who desired to exercise their influence over investments they had made in this country, and the object of his Amendment was to make this more simple and easier than was the case at the present time. He thought he was right in stating that under the clause as it stood proxies coming to this country would have to be taken to the authorities and stamped with an impressed stamp, which he thought was quite an unnecessary proceeding. It would be quite sufficient, and would both add to the income of the Exchequer and to the facilities of shareholders abroad who desired to exercise their influence over their investments, if it were made possible on receipt of proxies from agents abroad to put an ordinary adhesive stamp upon them within thirty days after receipt in the United Kingdom. It was undoubtedly a fact that the investments of foreigners in limited liability companies in this country were increasing enormously, and we ought to do everything we could to enable these foreigners to follow their property, because they added to our income-tax and to our wealth. Furthermore, when they sent their money across to this country they had a right to exercise their own judgment and opinion whether the directors were acting badly or well. The very fact that these proxies would have to be sent to the Stamp Office to be stamped was a decided deterrent to the person receiving the proxy. On the other hand, the mere addition of a 1d. stamp to the proxy, to be spoilt when affixed, would meet all the requirements of the Bill and greatly add to the facilities of shareholders.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 3, lines 29 and 30, to leave out the words 'in accordance with Section 15 of the said Act,' and to insert the words 'by any person with an adhesive stamp within thirty days after it has been first received in the United Kingdom.'"—(*Mr. Harmood-Banner.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

MR. ASQUITH said that the sole object of of the clause was to facilitate the use of proxies by shareholders and persons interested in companies residing abroad. The proxy could be sent by shareholders from abroad without any stamp, but the Government thought it right to apply the ordinary provisions of the Stamp Act upon arrival of proxies in this country, and require that a proxy should be stamped within thirty days of its arrival. If a proxy were stamped with an impressed stamp they would always be able to define whether or not such proxy had been stamped within the prescribed time, but if some adhesive stamp were affixed there would be no evidence whatever to show when it was stamped. The necessity of an impressed stamp was a very slight burden to impose upon those interested, and he thought they would take pains to see that the period of thirty days was not exceeded before the affixture of the stamp. He hoped the hon. Member would withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 9—

MR. HARMOOD-BANNER, in moving an Amendment to provide that the capital duty in the case of a reconstructed company should only be chargeable on the additional capital brought in, said he did not think the clause went quite far enough. It merely included loan capital, and what his Amendment intended to do was to include share capital within the benefits of the clause so as to facilitate reconstruction under the Companies Act, 1862. He thought there was no reason why shareholders should be unduly penalised when a company was reconstructed. He did not make any request or suggestion with regard to the transfer of old capital to a new company, but he thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer might fairly accept the Amendment whereby equal benefits would be conferred on share and loan capital. He knew a good many companies with a capital of nearly two millions which had been registered abroad because of the stamp duty to be paid on reconstruction, representing a loss of something like £5,000 to the Government on capital duty.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 4, line 16, at end, to add the words —'(3) Where it is shown to the satisfaction of the Commissioners that the share capital of a company which it is proposed to register under the Companies Acts, 1862 to 1900, is to be issued in pursuance of a scheme of reconstruction under section one hundred and sixty-one of The Companies Act, 1862, of a company registered under the Companies Acts, 1862 to 1900, the capital duty of five shillings per centum, imposed by The Finance Act, 1899, shall only be chargeable to the extent that the share capital, or any part of it, of the company to be registered is under the scheme to be paid up wholly or partly in cash.'"—(*Mr. Harmood-Banner.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. ASQUITH said that he doubted whether this was a proper place for the hon. Member to introduce his Amendment. The clause they were dealing with applied to the statutory corporations of the country. He did not think that the hon. Member's Amendment was really cognate to the subject matter of the clause. He was, however, rather disposed to agree with him that there was some substance in the contentions he had raised, but it would be extremely inconvenient, to say the least of it, to introduce such an Amendment into the clause. If he would allow him to do so, he would give the matter full consideration, if he had the opportunity of introducing another Finance Bill, in connection with the larger question of share capital as distinct from loan capital, and limited companies as compared with other companies.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 10:—

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he did not offer any objection to the clause; he was wholly in favour of it. But he would like to know what amount of revenue was likely to be lost by the series of concessions to the stamp duties, embodied in Part II. of the Bill.

MR. ASQUITH said the pecuniary difference would be very insignificant.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 11 :—

MR. ASQUITH moved to add a proviso to the effect that where an interest in expectancy has before 19th April, 1907, been *bona fide* sold or mortgaged, no other duty on that property shall be payable by the purchaser or mortgagee when the interest falls into possession than would have been payable if the clause had not passed; and in the case of a mortgage any higher duty payable by the mortgagor shall rank as a charge subsequent to that of the mortgagee. He said that he was following strictly in the footsteps of his predecessors. The question was whether the higher rates of estate duty which they proposed to impose by the clause on estates exceeding £150,000, should apply to cases of reversions which had already been sold or mortgaged. It had been represented to him by insurance companies which were very largely interested in transactions of this kind, that it would be a grievance if, subsequent to a transaction being entered into, the estate duty were raised, and the real profit of the transaction *ex post facto* considerably altered. He confessed he felt almost coerced into adopting the Amendment by the fact that in the Finance Acts of 1894 and 1900 a similar provision was inserted in regard to past transactions.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 4, line 38, at the end to insert the words, 'Provided that where an interest in expectancy (within the meaning of Part I. of the principal Act) in any property has before the nineteenth day of April, nineteen hundred and seven, been *bona fide* sold or mortgaged for full consideration in money or money's worth, then no other duty on that property shall be payable by the purchaser or mortgagee when the interest falls into possession than would have been payable if this section had not passed; and in the case of a mortgage any higher duty payable by the mortgagor shall rank as a charge subsequent to that of the mortgagee.'" — (*The Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he was glad to hear the explanation which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had given them. He was in entire agreement with the decision to which the right hon. Gentleman had come, and he hoped they might see him (Mr. Asquith) and his colleagues acting on the same principle with regard to the rest of their legislation.

Question put, and agreed to.

Question proposed, "That the Clause, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

*MR. HICKS BEACH opposed the clause in order to call attention to one or two points. The right hon. Gentleman in his Budget statement had said that very few of the prophecies made in regard to these duties when they were imposed in 1894 had been fulfilled; that as a result no persons had invested their capital abroad nor had any country houses been shut up. But let the right hon. Gentleman go round the country and see how many houses were shut up or let to strangers entirely owing to the burden of the estate duties. He could mention one house which after its being in the possession and occupation of a family for over 200 years, the present owner had been obliged to let owing to these duties; and that in itself was a great hardship, not only to the life tenant but to the tenants on the estate. But that was not all; he had had to turn off a great many servants from the estate thereby inflicting great hardship on them. Although these duties had increased to such an extent there had been no relief to the agricultural interest, and he certainly thought that if the right hon. Gentleman was going further to increase them he might at least give some further grant in relief of agricultural rates, because the duties had a very far-reaching effect upon agriculture, and the House knew only too well how the rates now pressed not only on the large, but on the small holders. If the right hon. Gentleman had seen his way to give some grant in relief of agricultural rates he would at least have done something to mitigate the effect of these duties. Then also there was the direct effect of these taxes on revenue. The right hon. Gentleman anticipated an increase of £1,200,000 from the duties, but owing to the length of time taken to settle up the estates the total increased yield this year from that source would only amount to £600,000. So far as he knew few people objected to hitting a millionaire as hard as they could, but there was one point the right hon. Gentleman had overlooked, viz., that in putting on this surtax on estates of over £1,000,000 in value and increasing the estate duty on estates of over £150,000, in the first place, he was drawing attention to the high pitch to which the duties had risen, and secondly, he was drawing the attention of the people who came into those estates to the fact that if their estate fell below a certain figure in value they would not pay nearly so much. The only result of that would be to make people divide up their estates to a large extent before they died. He believed large numbers of owners of property had already handed over if not the whole of their property, at any rate a large proportion, to their sons, so that when they died and their sons succeeded, they did not succeed to so large a property as they would otherwise have done had the estate duties not been imposed. The result therefore was that the Exchequer, instead of reaping a greater amount of revenue, only derived a small proportion, because the actual estate to which the sons succeeded at the death of their fathers was a comparatively small portion of the entire estate. The Chancellor of the Exchequer by this proposed increase would not increase the actual revenue, because he directly encouraged people to divide up their estates in their lifetime, and also because the steps of graduation were of such considerable length. The right hon. Gentleman went from £250,000 to £500,000, and from that to £750,000, and on to £1,000,000, and then to £1,500,000. Those were considerable steps, and he maintained that by leaving them at that degree the Chancellor of the Exchequer induced people to take steps to divide up their property, so that on their death the estate fell into a lower scale than that to which it originally belonged. For these reasons he believed that the Revenue would derive no benefit from the increased scale of duties, and he therefore hoped the clause would be rejected.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. RUNCIMAN, Dewsbury) said that the death duties had become an integral part of our system and he doubted whether the right hon. Gentleman who last held the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer ever contemplated for a moment reverting to the policy which was advocated in 1894. The proposal that was now made in the schedule was that a larger amount should be paid on the larger estates. The experience of the last few years had been profitable, and he doubted whether any of the fears entertained in 1894 had been realised in actual fact. The distribution of estates to which the hon. Member had alluded might have gone on to some extent, but even if it had he was not sure that it was an entirely bad policy. That estates should be cut up in that way was not altogether a disadvantage to the younger generation. But year after year for the last twelve years the revenue had gone on increasing, and only this year had there been any diminution. The rise had been continuous. The proposed increase began at a very high figure and applied to estates which were not likely to be distributed. The Government aimed at getting hold of estates of over £1,000,000, £2,000,000, and £3,000,000, in value. Such estates were more common to-day than ever they had been in the past; in fact, the Treasury had never known so large a number fall in, as they now found falling in year by year. Those who had an estate of over a million sterling could well afford to pay. He could not admit any of the arguments of the hon. Gentleman.

MR. WYNDHAM (Dover) said the only argument of the Financial Secretary was an argument in favour of increasing the scale of graduation, and that was a very valuable argument if once they accepted the death duties as being wholly for the good of the community. But let them cast back their minds, even upon that point, to the long debate which centred round the original proposal of Sir William Harcourt, otherwise they might forget that the principle of graduation had been always combined with the principle of aggregation, and that the recipients of very small bequests from the estate of a multi-millionaire were, as everybody would agree, inequitably taxed by comparison with the recipient of a million or millions. That was not a very important point, still it was a point when the Financial Secretary thought, as that afternoon, it sufficient to say that the death duties had become a permanent and integral feature of our finance. Why had they become a permanent and integral feature of our finance? It was because they had afforded one Government after another considerable sums of money which every Government in the past had needed, and which the present Government needed quite as much as any of its predecessors. Then as to direct taxation, hon. Members opposite had often put forward the plea that they were in favour of retaining the death duties because they thought that some system of equality between the taxpayers was arrived at if they made direct taxation as nearly as possible the same as indirect taxation. ["No, no."] He had heard that put forward; he thought hon. Members would agree that it had been again and again put forward that there should be 50 per cent. of direct, and 50 per cent. of indirect, taxation, and those who proposed it had turned round with an air of impartial justice and asked, "What more do you want?" That was only true generally of the whole revenue, but it was absolutely untrue of the revenue derived from certain portions of the United Kingdom. He took Ireland as an illustration, where, as a matter of fact, 75 per cent. came from indirect taxation, and only 25 per cent. from direct taxation. What was true of Ireland was true of all the Eastern counties of England, and also of the Western counties, Wiltshire and Dorsetshire. The plea that they were conferring impartial justice on the whole community by deriving half the revenue from direct taxation fell to the ground when they considered the agricultural community. He did not think it could be denied that this form of direct taxation hit the agricultural community harder than the industrial community. So that what was impartial justice according to the view of hon. Gentlemen opposite, was unjust to the agricultural districts according to the view of Members on that side of the House, who held that it was another injustice imposed upon the agricultural community. There was no special virtue in direct taxation as such, and there were evils attaching to it which were unforeseen for a long period and then became apparent. Direct taxation, in common with indirect taxation, was only to be justified if they got the money they needed without injury to the productive capacity and the general welfare of the community at large. The Financial Secretary had claimed that the death duties had enabled the Government to obtain many millions each year for national defence and social reform, and that nobody was a penny the worse; therefore, presumably, it was an ideal form of taxation, because they got the money without depressing the springs of future wealth. He thought the moment had arrived for asking, in no Party spirit, whether all that was as true as it seemed. It was true at first. But what had been going on? Fourteen years ago they would not find a family solicitor or a trustee generally who did not advise those for whom he acted to invest their money in gilt-edged securities—either in Consols, or in securities which rose and fell in sympathy with Consols. Now the family solicitor or trustee invariably gave advice utterly different; and consequently a considerable class in the community with small fortunes of £5,000 or £10,000 invested their money in securities which gave them a greater return. In the old days it used to be said that land did not run away; and the same thing was said of Consols. Nobody was saying that now; it was no longer true; and this was the moment, he thought, to bring that fact before the attention of the Committee This was a change, not a very great change, not a very important change, in the death duties, but it was a change which went still further in the direction which he mentioned. He was not asking the Committee to repeal the death duties; he was asking them not to be so self-satisfied and complacent in regard to the action of the death duties as perhaps both sides of the House had fallen into the habit of being. People divided up their estates, and it was the fact that younger sons were now given a security which produced the allowance formerly afforded them. And he would call attention to another fact, a very important one, which they ought not lightly to doubt—that money was being invested abroad at the present moment to an extent for which there was no parallel in the history of the country, and the death duties were one of the causes which produced that result, because 4½ to 5 per cent could be got from foreign investments.

MR. ASQUITH: How do the death duties produce that result?

MR. WYNDHAM: Because prior to the death duties the family solicitor and the trustee invariably advised the investment of money in Consols or British railway stock. Now they advised investments in South America, Mexico, Egypt, and the Australian Colonies, as well as in industrial enterprises in this country. That was one of the reasons why Consols stuck obstinately at eighty-four or eighty-three; and it was one of the reasons for the universal depression of first-class securities. To that extent there was more to be said for a greater recourse to indirect taxation than many people had recently been prepared to allow.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said the argument with regard to the equality of direct and indirect taxation, which was alleged to be common in the mouths of all of them, was one which had fallen from the last two or three Chancellors of the Exchequer, and had never been put before them so strongly as by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach. It had never been accepted in that quarter of the House, among the Radicals below the gangway. While this very small increase of the death duties was proposed here, foreign countries, most of whom raised more money by direct taxation proportionately than we did, France notably, were all increasing the death duties more rapidly than we were; and since our adoption of the graduated scale in 1894, there had been an enormous increase of the graduation of the death duties in rival foreign countries. In France, the death duties were far higher than here, and they were to be increased again by the proposals of the last Budget and the present Budget. In all the States of the German Empire there were not only State death duties but also facultative local progressive death duties. The Imperial progressive death duties were added to the local progressive death duties, and these death duties were increasing at a rate of which that House had little conception. They were also combined with a progressive income-tax, and the tax was used for local purposes, including enormous improvements in Hamburg and all the great cities of Germany, which improvements were being entirely effected out of this income tax and entirely out of direct taxation. If hon. Members opposite, who thought that direct taxation in this country was too high, considered what was taking place in France and Germany, and in Italy above all, perhaps, they would see that, even in countries which were mainly agricultural, and of which the resources were, in a far higher degree than here, agriculture, they would see that they were raising a vastly increased proportion of their revenue, both in Imperial and local taxation, by direct taxation in the forms of a progressive income-tax and progressive death duties. The right hon. Gentleman had spoken of this as an agricultural grievance, a matter in which he followed the mover of the rejection of the clause. It was a direction in which he certainly could not follow the right hon. Gentleman, and on which he desired to hear some more facts from those who took that view. It was perfectly true that the case of Ireland was not an isolated case. It was perfectly true that in many constituencies, his own for instance, they had the Irish grievance, that indirect taxation pressed very heavily on the people there, who paid a larger proportion of indirect taxation than did the country as a whole. How did that help this proposal? Did it not rather help the proposal to reduce indirect taxation? What was the position taken up by the right hon. Gentleman in the case he put before the House on behalf of agriculture? He suggested that capital was going abroad for fear of the death duties. How he could make that suggestion in face of the fact that the death duties were higher in France and were increasing far more rapidly abroad than they were in this country he could not for the life of him understand. In every foreign country they would find the same statement being made which had been made by the right hon. Gentleman—that capital was being driven out of the country by the death duties. Every foreign country was beginning to see that they had to raise larger sums from direct taxation, and we were slowly following the impulse which was becoming general, and in regard to which this country took a very important step in 1894.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport) said he understood the Financial Secretary to say that the Government were satisfied with the result of the death duties and that none of the fears expressed in former years had been realised. He would undertake to say that if they wanted to spell rural depopulation in two words it might be spelt "death duties." Empty cottages were more plentiful in the districts where the death duties had operated most disastrously. In many of the villages in England where large estates had recently changed hands they would find considerable depopulation resulting from the operation of the death duties. Although that might not be a conclusive argument against such duties he put it forward to substantiate some of the doubts expressed in former days. If the desire to put people back on the land and to maintain happy homes in the villages was genuine and not a political fraud they would recognise that it was the direct consequence of the death duties that those industrial rural communities had been dispersed. In his opinion the Financial Secretary to the Treasury was not correct when he suggested that they were entirely mistaken in their forebodings as to the result of the death duties.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. McKENNA, (Monmouthshire, N.) said two remarkable statements had been made as to the consequences of the death duties. The right hon. Member for Dover, who said that the exportation of capital was due to these duties, omitted to remind the Committee that foreign investments paid death duties just as much as home investments. So long as that was the case, it would be very difficult to prove that our death duties caused investment abroad. The fact was that trustees now had a much wider range of investment than they had before, and it was the Government of which the right hon. Gentleman was a Member which widened the area. This, amongst other causes, had seriously affected the price of Consuls. The last speaker had attributed rural depopulation to the death duties. Did he, then, date such depopulation from 1894 or show that it had increased more rapidly since that date? On the contrary, the right hon. and gallant Member had not shown that there was any relation between the death duties and rural depopulation. It was true that in rural districts there was now a larger percentage paid in indirect taxation than in urban districts, but it was not shown that rural districts were therefore as a whole taxed too highly. The right hon. Member for Dover had referred to the theory that indirect and direct taxation ought to contribute in the proportion of half and half to the revenue as an accepted theory. That theory was a very valuable theory at a time when the proportions were something like 80 per cent. of indirect and 20 per cent. of direct taxation, and he remembered the time very well when hon. Gentlemen on both sides received with great applause the statements of successive Chancellors of the Exchequer that they were endeavouring to bring this proportion more to an equality. But that did not mean that they were bound for ever to accept equality as their ideal. When there was anything but equality, and the burden of indirect taxation was especially hard, undoubtedly it was a wise thing to aim at equality; but to-day, when the standard was levelled up, it did not necessarily follow that it must stay at equality. No Chancellor of the Exchequer speaking on behalf of the Liberal Party had ever laid it down as an axiom that we ought to have equality between direct and indirect taxation. The only Chancellor of the Exchequer who had stated it positively, as far as he remembered, was Lord St. Aldwyn, who certainly did lay it down as an ideal, but it had never been accepted on that side. He saw no reason why the right hon. Gentleman should now assume that they were bound for all time never to allow direct to exceed indirect taxation. Speaking for himself, if it were possible, he would gladly see all indirect taxation done away with.

MR. WYNDHAM: You would have Consols at 40!

MR. McKENNA said the right hon. Gentleman had shown no relation whatever between direct taxation and Consols at 40. In an ideal system he thought nothing would be better than to have our whole taxation raised through income-tax and death duties; we should then get rid of all burdens upon trade from which we now suffered—the whole machinery of Customs. But that was the ideal. He did not intend to speak for anybody but himself. He would gladly see an extension downwards as well as upwards of income-tax, rather than any extension of indirect taxation, and he was sure that in the long run it would be found to the interest of the State. They would raise their money far more cheaply than at the present time and with much less interference with business. He protested against the assumption that they were in any way committed to the principle of equality between direct and indirect taxation.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he was not sure as to the relevancy of the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman to the Amendment before the Committee. Those remarks were interesting, and he thought hon. Members would agree with him when he said that he had never heard a more amazing statement from a Minister speaking on the Finance Bill. What was the doctrine he had just laid down? The right hon. Gentleman's position was that they might hold up to the House and the country a theory of taxation, but that they were not to be supposed as in any way committing themselves to the practice of that theory. They were merely using it as a convenient form of argument as long as the system of taxation in force erred more widely than the theory set up. The right hon. Gentleman said that they were not to be held to keep direct and indirect taxation exactly equal. That was a convenient theory, but if it was good when indirect exceeded direct it was equally good when direct exceeded indirect. The theory was sound or unsound. For his part he believed the theory had absolutely no foundation in fact, and that it was absolutely unjustified by any logical trend of thought. That, after all, was merely a little light on the ethics of policy as it appeared to the right hon. Gentleman, but he made a much more important statement because it was gravely enunciated as a financial principle. The right hon. Gentleman would like to abolish all indirect taxation and raise the whole of the revenue by income-tax and the death duties. He need not say that the right hon. Gentleman was never likely to be in a position—he did not think the right hon. Gentleman ever expected to be—to carry out that aspiration. That was unimportant, but what he wished to direct attention to was the argument by which the right hon. Gentleman sustained the proposition. His argument was that if they could place the whole burdens of the country upon the income-tax and the death duties they would get rid of all the burdens on trade. Did the Committee ever listen to a more amazing statement from a responsible Minister? Did the right hon. Gentleman suppose that one of our present Customs duties, the duty on tea, was a greater burden on trade than a 10 per cent. tax on incomes? A tax on income was as much a burden on trade as a charge on the articles of trade. There was absolutely no difference in that respect. It was only a difference in degree rather than principle between a tax upon accrued property such as the death duties and a tax upon articles of consumption such as Customs and Excise duties. The proposition of the right hon. Gentleman could not be sustained for a moment; he could not quote the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his support, for he had laid down to the House, and rightly so, that a high income-tax was a burden on trade, and that it affected not only the person who directly paid the tax, but indirectly those who were dependent for employment given by the payer of the tax. He thought that to everyone except the President of the Board of Education that proposition would be clear; he hoped that when the right hon. Gentleman had time to give a little more thought to the subject he would see that he could not relieve the burdens on trade by putting the whole of the burden of taxation on the income-tax or the death duties. There are two questions raised by the clause; one was the effect of the increase of the death duties on the revenue, and the other was the effect on the individual. These two questions were quite distinct and had to be treated separately. There was no doubt that the death duties had proved a wonderful source of revenue. They had shown wonderful power of expansion, but at the same time nobody who knew the fact would doubt that a good deal of property now escaped death duties which would not have escaped if they had been at a much more moderate level, or if the scale introduced by Sir William Harcourt had never been made. The effect on the whole had been to produce a largely increased sum, but the second effect had been to cause a certain number of people to consider how they could legitimately or otherwise evade payment of these heavy duties. The heavier they made the duties the greater was the temptation of people to evade them if they could. One form of avoidance was that to which his right hon. friend and also the Secretary of the Treasury had referred, namely, donations and gifts. He thought Sir William Harcourt could be quoted in support of the statement that that was a good thing in itself, as a social arrangement, and that they had no reason to regret it. When it was pointed out that this would be one of the effects of the death duties he was proposing, Sir William Harcourt said that if it was so it would be a very good result, and he would not be unhappy at having brought it about. Socially it had been a good result. It did enable a certain number of people in certain circumstances to reduce very much the burden that fell on their estates at their death. It worked very unequally. It was not always that a man could transfer to his heirs within his lifetime. He might die when they were children, and he could not distribute his estate in the same way as he could do if he lived till they were grown up. As long as that process went on it was bad for the revenue, but on the whole, setting the advantage to the community against the disadvantage to the revenue, the advantage predominated. But that was not the only form of evasion which went on. There was a class of securities absolutely untraceable on the death of the owner. There was no security that the death duties would be paid on "bearer" securities except the good faith of the person who owned them. These securities were not very largely held in this country, but those who did hold them were rich people whom the revenue authorities particularly wished to get at. One of the peculiarities of the death duties and one inconvenience in getting an increased contribution from rich people, was that it was always more easy for a man of superabundant wealth to evade and avoid them than for a man of moderate or small means. A man of moderate means had probably to pay up to the hilt. It was only rich men who were able, it might be by legitimate or illegitimate methods, to evade payment of their full share. That process of avoidance would and must, he believed, be hastened and increased by every step taken in the direction of making the burden heavier on those big fortunes. In so far as that process went on, in spite of the increased yield of the duties, it would be quickened by the steps now taken under this clause, and in so far as it went on it would be bad for the revenue. It was natural to expect that that would be so, looking at the analogy of the income-tax and what happened during the war, when it was raised from 8d. up to, at one point, 1s. 3d. in the £. If they consulted the Report of the Board of Inland Revenue, or the evidence given before the Committee on the Income-tax, they would find that the immediate result of that great rise was that there was an enormous increase in the number of people who claimed abatements from the tax. That was to say, the number of people who had not taken the trouble to make the claim when it was low did make it when the tax was high. In exactly the same way a number of people who did not go out of the ordinary routine to evade the death duties while they were moderate would set to the task of inquiring how they could evade them when they were made very high. That must have a bad effect from the revenue point of view. As to the other question, the effect upon the individual, he confessed that he did not think it unjust to take a larger share in death duties if they could get it from very rich men with property freely available and easily realisable, especially when that property did not carry with it great obligations which reduced the income apparently available to its possessor. But was that always so with big fortunes? It was so with big fortunes in personalty, but it was not so with big landed estates. There the capital value of the estate was out of proportion to the net revenue which the owner of the estate enjoyed and his obligations not merely legal but moral—obligations which he discharged from a sense of *noblesse oblige*, family traditions, duty to the estate, and the desire to carry out what his father had carried out before him. These made great inroads on the income apparently available for his own purposes. It was often excessively difficult to turn into cash a portion of the estate which he held. There were cases in which a man might be able to sell a portion of the estate in order to meet the claim, but there were other cases in which they could not easily do that, and he thought the effect of the large duties already imposed had been very hard in some of those cases. He quite agreed with his hon. friends who had already spoken that they had a distinctly bad effect on the economy of certain rural districts; that they turned out of the great houses, sometimes for a few years, and sometimes for many years, those who had the greatest sense of responsibility to the districts in which their families had lived, and put in their places tenants who came to-day and might be gone to-morrow, and who had none of that personal responsibility and care for the life and circumstance of the districts in which their home was temporarily placed. If there was anything in what he had said, the effect was to aggravate the evils of which he had spoken. For his part, though he did not see his way to modify the incidence of the death duties, he had left them as he found them, and he thought that when the Chancellor of the Exchequer was proposing to increase the death duties he should have made an endeavour, while getting more money from those who could afford to pay, to lessen the hardships caused to others less wealthy.

Mr. EVANS (Glamorganshire, Mid.) said that the debate on this clause had ranged over many subjects, and he was quite sure that they were very much obliged to the late Chancellor of the Exchequer for having pointed out how hard the death duties might be on the landed interest, and how easy they would be on persons who enjoyed personal property! He expressed surprise at the speech of the President of the Board of Education, which, carried to its logical conclusion, would mean the removal of all indirect taxation, such as the duties on spirits, tobacco, and tea and other commodities. He deprecated the discursive and Utopian discussion in which the right hon. Gentleman and others had taken part, and wished to bring the Committee back to something practical. He was entirely in favour of the death duties from the point of view of the landed interest as well as from the point of view of those who had large personal property. Whatever the late Chancellor of the Exchequer might say now, when he was in office, and when he had a large and obedient majority at his back, he did not endeavour to get away from the principle of death duties, or modify them in the sense he had indicated in the debate that evening. He thought the right hon. Gentleman was entirely mistaken in asking the Committee to believe that when the income-tax was increased to 1s. 2d. in the £ there was greater evasion than when it was at a lower rate.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that what he had stated was that there were many more claims for abatement when the tax was increased. When the tax was comparatively low many persons who were entitled to abatement did not claim it; and he argued from that that if the death duties were made higher there would be attempts to evade them.

Mr. EVANS said he was entirely in favour of death duties both on landed and personal property, as he had said, but his complaint against the Chancellor of the Exchequer was that the right hon. Gentleman had been much too easy in the increase he had made. First of all, he had only commenced his increase of duty when he arrived at £150,000; up to that sum the rate of duty being that established in 1894. Why did he not begin at £100,000, instead of £150,000? And why after £1,000,000, having raised the rate by £1, did he cease to raise the rate. It might have been thought from that point the increase would have been by leaps and bounds.

MR. ASQUITH: Was not that moderate?

MR. EVANS said that the extremity of the moderation of the right hon. Gentleman was only arrived at after £1,000,000 was passed. It was a grotesque arrangement. From £500,000 to £750,000 the rate was £9 per cent.; from £750,000 to £1,000,000 it was £10 per cent., and then it might have been expected that the increase would go on. But the scale proposed was from £1,000,000 to £1,500,000, £10 on £1,000,000 and £11 per cent. on the remainder; from £1,500,000 to £2,000,000, £10 on £1,000,000 and £12 per cent. on the remainder; and with every additional £500,000 there was an additional £1 per cent. on the excess over £1,000,000 up to £3,000,000. He wanted to know what particular reason there was for raising the duty by £1 as the estate increased up to £1,000,000 from £750,000, and then stopping short and going into fractional parts. The right hon. Gentleman should have the courage of his convictions and not have been so extremely moderate. Nobody would have complained. The deceased could not complain and the representative of the person coming into possession of over £1,000,000 would have no reason to complain of an increase of one per cent. rather than a fraction of one per cent.

SIR F. BANBURY (City of London) said that the right hon. Member for Forest of Dean had stated that the death duties were higher in France than in England, but if France was to be our guide the French system of taxation would have to be followed throughout.

SIR CHARLES DILKE said that everybody in France now believed that their system of taxation ought to be improved. At any rate, the direct taxation in that country was much higher than it was here.

SIR F. BANBURY said that what he really rose for was to answer the extraordinary statement of the President of the Board of Education. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was to tax profits on trade and also to take death duties. That would make success in trade almost impossible, and it would also make it impossible for some people to succeed to landed property. He did not, like the right hon. Member for Dover, believe that capital was going abroad in consequence of the imposition of the death duties. It had been said quite truly that foreign securities had to pay death duties as well as English, but foreign securities were mostly "bearer" securities, which, although very unpopular in England, were popular abroad, because by means of them the income-tax could be evaded. These death duties pressed heavily upon estates which were divided among a large number of people because, said the right hon. Gentleman, the family always sent for the family solicitor, who arranged these matters and secured the lowest rate of estate duty. But somebody had to pay it. If a man having eight children left a million of money, each child would receive £125,000, and the estate would be subject to a death duty of 10 per cent. If his brother had £125,000 and only one child his estate would only have to pay 6 per cent. Could the right hon. Gentleman suggest to him in what way the family solicitor being called in would alter that state of things? He admitted that the rise in the death duties was not large; indeed as the sum which would be raised by it was not large, there seemed hardly any necessity to make it at all. Although it was true that the death duties dealt with large sums of money and that, as the late Sir Wm. Harcourt said, people did not like to part with their money during their life-time, still the tendency to do so would be increased if these death duties were raised. People with money were however becoming accustomed to these death duties, and although the desire not to part with their money was ingrained in human nature, it would be a national evil if through legislation they were induced to do so.

MR. ASQUITH pointed out that the Statute dealing with the death duties had not been changed by the Conservative Government.

SIR F. BANBURY replied that it was not the habit of the different Parties to change the legislation of their predecessors when they came into office. He was afraid, however, that the Party opposite were going to do so, and therefore in consequence when the Unionists came back to power they would probably have to change some of their legislation. He did not think that capital was going abroad on account of the death duties, but as the change in these duties was only going to bring in £600,000 when the total death duties yielded £14,400,000, he thought it was a mistake to stir up all the old feeling on the subject for so small an advantage. Therefore, in the interests of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, he would vote for the Amendment and against his proposal.

MR. ASQUITH was very much obliged to the hon. Baronet for his consideration and greatly appreciated the tone and temper of his remarks, but he had somewhat under-rated the effect of the change. During the present year it was not safe to estimate for more than £600,000 or £700,000; but when the change came into complete operation, looking at the yearly average of the last ten years, it was likely to bring in about a million and a quarter. He could assure the hon. Gentleman that that sum was a welcome addition to a Chancellor of the Exchequer with not over-swollen resources. He agreed that the scale was open to the observations of his hon. and learned friend; but it seemed to go as far as was prudent at present. If the yield was in excess of their anticipations and it appeared that further steps were not likely to be attended with detrimental results on the accumulation of capital or on the development of trade, he saw no reason why they should not be taken. The low price of Consols could not be attributed to the death duties, for Consols had gone on rising after the death duties were introduced, and had reached their record point and high water mark of 113 or 114 in 1896, some years afterwards. There was no connection either between the death duties and the exportation of capital. The countries to which capital was being exported were countries in which death duties had long prevailed. Death duties had the enormous advantage to the revenue of being much the most difficult duties to evade. Income-tax under the present law, and probably under any improvement they could make in the law, could be evaded to a large extent. Facilities for fraud and concealment and illegitimate interchange of wealth as between man and man were so great, that an income-tax which would operate fairly and justly between all classes of the community was an ideal which could never be fully attained. Death duties, however, were extremely difficult to evade. The only effective way of evasion was by doing what was repugnant to human nature, parting with the possession and control of property in one's own lifetime. Without going into the problem of what was, or what ought to be, the precise proportion between direct and indirect taxation, they had here the most potent instrument yet invented for taxing realised wealth. He was only asking the Committee to proceed on lines which were well justified by experience and suggesting tentatively a step in advance likely to bring a large accession of revenue and to lay the foundations for further advance.

MR. J. F. MASON (Windsor) admitted that there was a justification for this clause if it were only applied to personal revenue, but thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer was throwing away an opportunity of rectifying a great injustice now existing on account of the absence of differentiation between the duties on personal and real estate. It was quite a different thing to charge land and to charge money invested in securities. As to the question of evasion he would point out that the opportunities were much larger and could be more easily availed of in the case of personal property than in the case of land. Let them take for example the instances of two men, one of whom succeeded to an estate of £100,000 in land, and the other £100,000 in personalty. The man who succeeded to the landed estate would be lucky if he got an income of £2,000 a year, yet he had to pay his death duties, in order to do which he had very often to borrow money, and had the extra difficulty that he was not able to realise any portion of his estate in order to pay the duty. On the other hand the man who succeeded to the personalty, possibly gilt-edged securities, not only derived an income nearly twice as large as the other man, but also had the advantage of lopping off a part of his estate and so getting rid at once of the death duties and having the remainder settled once and for all. He ventured to think that this was an opportunity which might have been taken advantage of to remedy the injustice by differentiation. He would not have objected to see the estate duty on personalty increased so long as the duty on land was not increased. Land was burdened enough already. He thought in the interests of the community at large and the interests of justice it was most important that the principle of differentiation should be acknowledged.

MR. BOWLES (Lambeth, Norwood) said the question before the Committee was not whether we should have death duties or whether it was a good or bad form of taxation, but whether the new form of graduating the death duties proposed by the right hon. Gentleman was a good, useful, and fair graduation. He himself believed that all graduations, with one exception, were really a mistake and wrong, because they proceeded on a principle which was mischievous and unsound. All taxes were disagreeable, but they were necessary, and the principle upon which we should proceed with regard to them was that if a tax was to be paid it should be regarded by the person who paid it as a payment for services rendered to him by the State. If that principle was sound then the argument was unanswerable that if a man possessed property twice the value of that of his neighbour, the services rendered to him by the State were double those rendered to his neighbour, and therefore his property should be taxed twice as much. That being so, graduation was bad with the exception of the graduation of a tax on the necessities of bare existence. That, however, was not a plea that could be made in this case, because what the right hon. Gentleman was doing did not begin until the estate amounted to £150,000. It was therefore a frank application of the principle that a man ought to pay to the Government not in proportion to what he received, but in proportion to what others had received. There was an ancient principle taught by the Jesuit Fathers of Spain that if one saw a man going to rob a poor man it was a right principle to take the man by the shoulder and point out to him a rich man whom he might rob instead. That was the principle adopted by the right hon. Gentleman. The hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London had pointed out one great injustice of this process of graduation; he would point out another. Suppose that under this scale a millionaire died and left to his butler £1,000. Under the right hon. Gentleman's scale the butler paid 10 per cent., or £100, on succeeding to that £1,000. But reverse the case, and suppose the butler died and left it to his master the millionaire: the latter would only pay 2 per cent. His real objection to the proposal for screwing up the graduation of the death duties was that he believed it would have a serious and bad effect on the revenues. These heavy duties had resulted in evasion and avoidance, and if it was true as the right hon. Gentleman said, that evasion could only be effected by doing what was repugnant to human nature, it showed that these duties were regarded as being so unfair that people were prepared to do what was repugnant rather than to submit to them. The real truth was that all graduation was wrong. But if there was to be graduation, unless the right hon. Gentleman was going to do more harm than good the graduation must be by almost imperceptible steps in order that a man should not know exactly how he stood, and have no temptation to deal with his property. The right hon. Gentleman had adopted the other principle, which would inevitably lead to increasing the temptation of a man to get off the step on which he stood and on to the next below. He would instance the case of a triple millionaire. The first million would pay £100,000, and the other two millions £300,000—in all, £400,000. If he were able to get rid of £2,000,000, he would save three-quarters of the duty. The temptation to such a man to do that was certainly enormous. For these reasons, because it was perpetuating and increasing an injustice, and because at the same time it would bring no real advantage to the right hon. Gentleman's revenue, he considered this a thoroughly bad proposal, and, what was worse or quite as bad in these matters, a thoroughly foolish proposal.

LORD WILLOUGHBY DE ERESBY (Lincolnshire, Horncastle) agreed that some of the pictures which were conjured up when the proposal as to these duties was made in 1894, had not been entirely fulfilled; at the same time he was of opinion that, of all the people in this country, the most heavily taxed were the men who had inherited large landed estates, and who, certainly, for three or four years had practically to pay out the whole of the income to meet the death duties. Several cases had occurred where undoubtedly great reductions had been made in establishments in the country, with the result that large numbers had been thrown out of work. Moreover, there could be no doubt that it had been found impossible to carry on the work of the estate, to build cottages for small holdings, and to effect other improvements, owing to the economies which the landowner was compelled to exercise in order to meet the death duties. During fourteen years there had been no change in these duties, and people had been able to make provision for paying the amount which fell due to the Treasury at their death, so that their relatives should not be left in an impoverished state. Arrangements had been made, either by life insurance or by other methods, by which the death duties could be met without incurring hardships on the heir. But this proposal to increase the death duties must instantly cause a great feeling of insecurity in the minds of those who had accumulated capital in this country. He did not anticipate, from the Chancellor of the Exchequer's speeches and public acts, that they were likely to have any Bills introduced which, as he had said in his speech that day, would have the effect of stopping the accumulation of capital in this country or have any detrimental effect on trade. He believed, however he might differ from him on many subjects, that the right hon. Gentleman would take the greatest care that no proposal which would have such an effect was made. But when they heard the speeches of some hon. and right hon. Members, especially that of the right hon. Gentleman the Minister for Education, that the present proposal did not go far enough, he thought it must be perfectly apparent to everybody that it might be the thin end of the wedge, and that in future, whenever a Progressive Government was in office and they wanted money, they would increase the death duties. The consequence would be seriously to decrease confidence in this country as to the holding of property in any form. It would be a serious thing for our trade and prosperity if security and confidence were to be shaken and capital removed. After all, it was not a brave expedient, whenever a million or two was required, immediately to tax the rich people. It was believed by hon. Members opposite that wealth carried with it great power; but that was not the fact. He was rather disappointed when he heard the Chancellor of the Exchequer say that he did not consider the proposal made on this occasion to be final in any way. He was perfectly certain of one thing, that once it got about that whenever the Chancellor of the Exchequer wanted money he would raise the scale of the death duties, it must lead to a great feeling of insecurity. He knew that the answer of hon. Gentlemen opposite was always that there was no difference between real and personal property, and that it was perfectly easy for a landowner to meet the death duties by borrowing money on his estate. He had some experience in these matters, and he knew that if anything could be done to make the condition of agriculture worse, and consequently the condition of rural districts, it was to encourage landlords to raise money on mortgage and encumber their estates. It meant that an estate was tied up, and that either nothing could be done to ameliorate the condition of the people living upon it or the whole thing was handed over to trustees who would try to bleed the rural district for the greatest amount possible. The Chancellor of the Exchequer should carefully consider whether he ought not to make some definite statement that day to the effect that having gone so far in this direction it was not intended to go any further. Under the old scale of death duties it had been possible, as he had said, for persons to make arrangements by which to meet them, but if, whenever a million or two was required, this cowardly policy, for that was what he called it, of raising the scale of the death duties was to be resorted to, then persons would not be able to make such arrangements, and estates would become encumbered throughout the length and breadth of England, a result which would have a most disastrous effect on the rural districts of the country.

MR. W. REDMOND (Clare, E.) said he occupied a somewhat detached position, as he belonged to neither of the two great Parties. He was often lost in amazement at the tactics pursued in that House by Parties when they took office and when they were in opposition. The whole of that afternoon a series of attacks had been made on the death duties by hon. Gentlemen above the gangway on the Opposition side of the House. To listen to their speeches one would imagine that if they had the opportunity they would not allow half an hour to elapse before they abolished the death duties, and brought relief to the poor long-suffering millionaires of the country whom they represented. But everybody knew that during the whole time the Unionist Party were in power, they had never in all the years since the death duties were enacted, said as much against them as they had said that afternoon. They had every opportunity when they were in power of undoing the great work of Sir William Harcourt, but the idea was so popular with the working people of the country generally that they never attempted in the slightest degree to interfere with it. But now that they were in Opposition they lifted up their voices in the most piteous manner about the woes of the millionaires and the iniquities of the death duties. He read somewhere in a newspaper not long ago of a man who had visited the House of Commons. He was rather an irrverent person, because he said there was a good deal of "humbug" in the place. When asked what he meant by that, he said that when a Party was in opposition they invariably saw all sorts of evils in things to which, when they were in power, they never had any objection whatever. The whole thing was somewhat hollow and insincere, and it was made all the more so when they had such a speech as that which had been delivered by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer. The right hon. Gentleman had delivered an attack upon the proposed change in the graduation of the death duties, and yet when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer he never made the slightest attempt to undo the Act of Sir William Harcourt, and had never uttered a single word, so far as he knew, against the system. But, free from office, he came to the House, and drew a picture, sufficient almost to bring tears to one's eyes, of the tremendous sufferings which had been endured by the wealthy classes of the country. The ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer had drawn a picture which had really touched him very much, when he spoke of representatives of ancient families, the old aristocracy of the country, being obliged sadly and sorrowfully to close the ancestral halls and go away, because they could not live there with the dread of the death duties over them—with the horrible result that some new rich people came along and installed themselves in the ancestral homes of the aristocrats of England. If that was the result of Sir William Harcourt's death duties, it was very terrible indeed. But he thought that if the people were aware of it at all, it was not until they were informed of it by the right hon. Gentleman. He had criticised the Chancellor of the Exchequer gladly because he had not removed the tea duty, but he thought the proposal they were now discussing was the very best thing in the budget. The general wish of the country was that they should go further and put a great deal more on the death duties. He asked the Committee to imagine at the beginning of this century hon. Gentlemen defending the enormously wealthy people of the country and declaring that they ought to be relieved of a reasonable share of taxation. In other parts of the world the death duties were much heavier. The evidence given before the Committee on Income-tax, of which he was a member, showed that the taxation of the wealthier persons abroad was heavier than in this country. He would have thought hon. Members would be ashamed to come down to the House and whine about being asked to pay a reasonable amount of taxation towards the revenue of the country. The time would come when a much heavier burden would be put upon those who had amassed enormous fortunes. At the present time there was too great a proportion of taxation placed upon the extremely poor. It was a most astounding thing that the people who were continually complaining about taxation were the very wealthy, and those who paid with the least murmuring were the poorest part of the population. He hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his Budget next year would go further along this path and make those persons who had so much surplus wealth pay more than they did at the present time towards the revenue of the country.

Viscount TURNOUR (Sussex, Horsham) said the hon. Member for East Clare had complained that the Opposition on this question held different views from those they expressed when in office. He did not pretend to have the same knowledge of constitutional history as the hon. Member, but he would find what he complained of was true of every Parliament throughout the world, and it would probably be true of a Parliament in Dublin when the hon. Member himself might be Chancellor of the Exchequer. If by using that argument the hon. Member intended to do a kindness to the Party in power he could not possibly have done them more harm. He had risen to contradict the hon. Member's statement that the rich men in other countries were much more heavily taxed than in England. Surely the hon. Member in his constitutional researches had overlooked the case of America, where rich men were not so heavily taxed as in this country, where the income-tax was practically non-effective, and where the duties paid by rich men were much smaller than in this country. The opposition to the clause was directed against a graduated scale of death duties and the point was whether such duties were or were not advisable. Nothing which had been said in the course of the debate had given the Committee any ground for supporting the right hon. Gentleman in his proposal to graduate the death duties. He did not believe that the proposal would have the effect which the right hon. Gentleman imagined and he hoped the Committee would reject the clause.

Lord BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley) said the Financial Secretary to the Treasury had said that, so far as he knew, no evil result had followed from the Act of 1894. He ventured to say that at least one evil result had followed, because, in consequence of that Act and still more in consequence of the extension of it this year, there had been an ever-increasing export of works of art from this country, such as pictures, libraries, plate, and everything in the nature of works of art. This exportation was steadily going on, and the cause of it was very largely the operation of the death duties. The late Sir William Harcourt himself in 1894 admitted that that was the only argument which really affected him in the criticism of his Finance Bill. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach made an alteration in 1896 which to some extent mitigated that evil, but the effect for the last thirteen years had been a constant and ever-increasing stream of works of art out of this country.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: No.

Lord BALCARRES admitted that that was to some extent a matter of opinion, but he could assure hon. Members that ten years ago there was practically no country in the world which bought works of art from Great Britain except the United States of America. In 1900 competition with Germany became very serious, and during the last four or five years France and Austria and even Spain had been taking part in this competition. Italy, the country from which half our great collections had been taken, was now actually entering the British market as a competitor with other buying countries. As far as he could ascertain, the importation of works of art from the Continent was only about one-fifth of our exports. He was not putting the point on fiscal grounds. Whether it was directly attributable to the death duties he would not say, but that it was so in the case of fifteen or twenty particular instances he unhesitatingly asserted to be the fact. So far as he could learn, in this country works of art in the vast majority of cases were sold by their inheritors when the death duties had to be paid. There were agents on the Continent who, one way and another, had access to the country houses of this country and had regular records sent to them. He had known cases where gentlemen had received letters from foreign agents acting for foreign buyers offering substantial sums for a whole room. He thought the country at large was all the poorer for the loss of these works of art. Many of them were in private hands, but there was no country in the world where the public, in these matters had more free, regular, and systematic access to private collections than in Great Britain. It was almost impossible in these death duties to discern the amount realisable from any particular class of property. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had no official information to enable him to give the Committee the figures. If asked what he estimated the net income derived from works of art to be the right hon. Gentleman would be unable to tell them. He himself had made an estimate and his conclusion was that out of the £15,000,000 received during the last highly successful death duties year something like £250,000 was received by the Exchequer entirely on account of works of art. He did not say that that was the exact amount payable on them, but it was almost susceptible of proof that the amount of money so gained by the State was a very appreciable item. He thought the effect of this clause would be to increase the tendency to which he had referred. He regretted that, and he wished that the right hon. Gentleman could see his way to substitute some other system for this particular valuation of works of art. If there was a tax on sales of works of art, it would only be incurred by those who desired to purchase, and it would extend over a vastly greater number of persons than were at present touched. It would reach the foreign buyers, who were far greater in number and more opulent in the purchases than the British buyers, and altogether they would get a larger sum than at the present moment. The constant drain of works of art from this country was sensibly making the nation poorer. He would like that the allocation of the money so received should be given to a greater extent than at present to the National Galleries. Of course the Chancellor of the Exchequer could not allocate the proceeds to particular items in the Civil Service Estimates, but he thought it would be worth while considering later on, in view of the gigantic sum of money received from this particular source in connection with the death duties, whether the art services of the country should not be treated more generously in future.

MR. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield) called attention to the scale set out in the Schedule, and stated that it seemed to him that there were certain classes of property which did not at present pay enough. If a man died leaving a thousand acres of land containing minerals, which land must have a market value in respect of those minerals, the estate only paid duty on the value of the agricultural land.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. Member cannot raise this question on the clause now before the Committee.

MR. MARKHAM asked whether it would not be in order to point out how increased revenue could be obtained in the way indicated.

*THE CHAIRMAN: It does not arise on the clause now before the Committee, I think, because it does not, as I understand it, affect the alteration of the scale.

*MR. GEORGE FABER (York) said that the Chancellor of the Exchequer in some of his remarks had caused him disquietude, because he not only proposed to increase the already heavy death duties which had remained fixed since the Act of 1894 was passed, but had indicated that it was perfectly possible that in future years under certain circumstances those duties would be still further increased. He was sorry that the right hon. Gentleman had thought it his duty to hold out a threat of that kind. Last week for the first time since the right hon. Gentleman entered upon his important office he did hold out a little olive branch of peace which gave encouragement to the capitalist interest of the country. The remarks he made sympathetically last week tended to produce important and beneficent results. Having put a little hope into the capitalists of the country, he now proceeded to hold over their heads a prospective danger in the shape of a threat of increased death duties. If one only looked at it from the point of view of the multi-millionaires there would be a certain amount to be said for the increase, but if they looked to the effect on the whole financial condition of the country it would be seen that capital in the multifarious ways in which it was employed could not operate to the same extent if it was to be further penalised. Employment and capital were so intermingled and interlaced that it was almost impossible to divorce the one from the other, so that when they were considering the effect of heavy death duties on the one they must also consider the result to the other. The Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed this alteration in the law at a most unfortunate time. When Sir William Harcourt introduced his scheme of death duties the income-tax was not at 1s. as it was now. With high death duties in operation, together with £20,000,000 of war taxation, it was proposed at this particular and unfortunate concatenation of events to put fresh taxation on capital. Formerly Chancellors of the Exchequer in raising revenue tried to keep an equal and impartial hand between direct and indirect taxation, and the time at which this change was proposed was from his point of view an exceedingly perilous one. When a man died the estate duty had to be paid. There were three ways in which it could be done. It could be paid in cash, or if there was only landed property a mortgage must be raised upon it, or an insurance could be effected to meet it. To take the case he had mentioned last, that of insuring against the payment of death duties with an insurance office. He himself had heard only last week from one of the biggest insurance companies in the City, that men were constantly coming into the office for that purpose. That meant in many cases paying out very large annual sums to the insurance offices who were not philanthropists, and would not do business for nothing. It might run into thousands a year. [An HON. MEMBER: Hear hear!] The hon. Gentleman said "Hear, hear," but what was the result? If a man paid this large amount of insurance money he could not spend it on the employment of labour, and thus not only was the rich man penalised but the employment of labour was lessened. Totake the second case, that of the landowners who had not got the money to pay the estate duties in cash and who had to raise it by mortgage. In the first place it was not easy nowadays to raise money on mortgage on land at all. Certainly, as a business man, he would be very slow indeed to lend money on land after all the threats that were now held over the heads of landowners. But even if a landowner was able to raise a mortgage, the mortgagee would not lend the money for nothing. The mortgagor would have to pay very considerable interest on the money advanced. The result was that the house was shut up—not in the case of the millionaire, but in the case of a man enjoying only an income from the land of £3,000 or £4,000 a year; employment of labour was cut off and distress was promoted. But let him put the case from another point of view—from the revenue point of view. There must come a stage where the income-tax and the estate duty became competitors with each other, because even Government Departments could not eat their cake and have it. He instanced the case of a millionaire who now paid £80,000 estate duty and under the proposed alteration would be called upon by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to pay £100,000. There would be £20,000 less of capital value on which to levy income-tax in the hands of the successor. The State could not take it in both forms. If the State took the money in estate duties it could not take it on the same money in income-tax.

He would not of course, carry the argument too far—that there should not be estate duties at all. Of course the Chancellor of the Exchequer might say that there were no outward or visible signs to show that there was any contraction of the estate duty or the income-tax. True, but with the population of the country increasing they must expect some increase, and there came a point where the Chancellor of the Exchequer must look at the estate duty and the income-tax in conjunction, and seriously consider their effect on each other and on the community at large. They would not see the result of undue pressure on capital all at once. The imposition of a heavy death duty on the top of a war income tax was like the Chancellor of the Exchequer squeezing or sucking an orange at both ends. What he wanted to impress on the right hon. Gentleman was the argument from the point of view of the good of the country and not merely from the point of view that the millionaire, who was supposed to be fair game—a daw to peck at and for everybody to laugh at. They were pressing capital too far in this country, and when the mischief was done there was no going back. The time would come when there would be no longer an orange to squeeze, and right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite would then repent not having taken the warning of a humble individual like himself.

MR. ASQUITH rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 309; Noes, 89. (Division List No. 260.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Adkins, W. Ryland D.
Agnew, George William
Alden, Percy
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Sir John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, Redmond J. (Tyrone, N.)
Beauchamp, E.
Beck, A. Cecil
Belloc, Hilaire Joseph Peter R.
Berridge, T. H. D
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, Sir J. H. (Essex Romf'rd)
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Sir Alfred
Birrell, Rt Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W.
Boland, John
Boulton, A. C. F.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Bryce, J. Annan
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt. Hn. Richard Knight
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew, W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras, W.
Corbett, C. H (Sussex, E. Grinstd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crosfield, A. H.
Davies, Ellis William (Eifion)
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Devlin, Joseph
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dickinson, W. H. (St. Pancras, N
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Duckworth, James
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. Martin (Walsall
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Sir Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Esslemont, George Brinie
Evans, Samuel T.
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Rt Hn. Sir W. Brampton
Gwynn, Stephen Lucius
Hall, Frederick
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harvey, W. E. (Derbyshire, N.E.
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hedges, A. Paget

Hemmerde, Edward George
Henderson,J.M.(Aberdeen,W.
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Col. Sir Ivor (Mon. S.)
Herbert,T.Arnold(Wycombe)
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hogan, Michael
Holland,SirWilliam Henry
Hope,JohnDeans (Fife, West)
Hope,W.Bateman(Somerset,N.
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jackson, R. S.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones,William(Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kettle, Thomas Michael
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
Lamb,EdmundG. (Leominster)
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Lardner, James Carrige Rushe
Law, Hugh A. (Donegal, W.)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever,A.Levy(Essex,Harwich
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt.Hon.David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald,J.M.(FalkirkB'ghs
Maclean, Donald
MacNeill,John Gordon Swift
MacVeigh,Charles(Donegal,E.
M‘Callum, John M.
M‘Crae, George
M‘Kenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald
M‘Killop, W.
M‘Laren,Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M‘Micking, Major G.
Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield,H.Rendall(Lincoln)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Meagher, Michael
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alport
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. May (Cornwall)
Morgan,J.Lloyd(Carmarthen)
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murnaghan, George
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholson,CharlesN.(Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien,Kendal(TipperaryMid
O'Connor, John (Kildare,N.)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.
O'Kelly,James(Roscommon,N.
O'Malley, William
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Pearce, Robert(Staffs., Leek)
Pearce, William(Limehouse)
Pearson,W.H.M.(Suffolk,Eye)
Philipps,Col.Ivor(S'thampton
Philipps,J.Wynford(Pembroke
Philipps,OwenC. (Pembroke)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Pollard, Dr.
Price,C.E.(Edinb'gh,Central)
Price,RobertJohn(Norfolk,E.)
Pullar, Sir Robert
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Redmond,John E. (Waterford
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards,Thomas(M.Monm'th
Richardson, A.
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts,CharlesH. (Lincoln)
Roberts,John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson,Rt.Hn.E.(Dundee)
Robertson,SirG.Scott(Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche,Augustine (Cork)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Schwann,SirC.E.(Manchester)
Scott,A.H.(Ashton-under-Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smyth, Thomas F. (Leitrim,S.
Snowden, P.
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley,Hn.A.Lyulph(Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor,TheodoreC.(Radcliffe)
Tennant,SirEdward(Salisbury
Tennant,H.J.(Berwickshire)
Thomas,SirA.(Glamorgan,E.)
Thomas,DavidAlfred(Merthyr
Thomasson, Franklin
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Verney, F. M.
Wadsworth, J.
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walters, John Tudor
Walton,SirJohnL.(Leeds, S.)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wardle, George J.
Waring, Walter
Wason,Rt.Hn.E.(Clackmannan
Wason,JohnCathcart(Orkney)
Watt, Henry A.
Weir, James Galloway
Whitbread, Howard
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley,John Henry(Halifax)
Whittaker,Sir Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williamson, A.
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson,Hon.C.H.W.(Hull,W.)
Wilson,HenryJ.(York,W.R.)
Wilson,John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson,J.W.(Worcestersh.N.)
Wilson,P.W.(St.Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton
Winfrey, R.
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Acland-Hood,Rt.HnSirAlex.F.
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt.Hon.SirH.
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour,RtHn.A.J.(CityLond.)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Baring,Capt.Hn.G.(Winchester
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry,N.)
Beach,Hn.MichaelHughHicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bignold, Sir Arthur

Bowles, G. Stewart
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. H. M.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt. Hon. Victor C. W.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A. (Worc.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hn. J. (Birmingh'm
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.)
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Faber, Capt. W. V. (Hants, W.)
Fell, Arthur
Fletcher, J. S.
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Haddock, George R.
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Helmsley, Viscount
Hervey, F. W. F. (Bury S. Edm'ds
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hon. Col. W.
Keswick, William
King, Sir Henry Seymour (Hull)
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants., Fareham
Lockwood, Rt. Hn. Lt.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
Lonsdale. John Brownlee
Lowe, Sir Francis William
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Meysey-Thompson, E. C.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Moore, William
Morpeth, Viscount
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parker, Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Percy, Earl
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Sheffield, Sir Berkeley George D.
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, F. E. (Liverpool, Walton)
Starkey, John R.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Thomson, W. Mitchell-(Lanark)
Turnour, Viscount
Walker, Col. W. H. (Lancashire)
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Viscount Valentia and Mr. Forster.

Question put accordingly, "That the Clause, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 315; Noes, 82. (Division List No. 261.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Adkins, W. Ryland D.
Agnew, George William
Alden, Percy
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hon Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Baring, Capt. Hn. G (Winchester
Barker, John
Barlow, Sir John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, Redmond J. (Tyrone, N.)
Beauchamp, E.
Beck, A. Cecil
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell, Sir J. H. (Essex, Romf'rd
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Sir Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W.
Boland, John
Boulton, A. C. F.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Bryce, J. Annan
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt. Hn. Richard Knight
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew, W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras, W.
Corbett, C H (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crosfield, A. H.
Davies, Ellis William (Eifion)
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Devlin, Joseph
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dickinson, W. H. (St. Pancras, N.
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Duckworth, James
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. Martin (Walsall
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Sir Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Evans, Samuel T.
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Rt Hn. Sir W. Brampton
Gwynn, Stephen Lucius

Hall, Frederick
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harvey,W.E.(Derbyshire,N.E.
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hedges, A. Paget
Hemmerde, Edward George
Henderson,J.M.(Aberdeen, W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert,Col.Sir Ivor(Mon.,S.)
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hogan, Michael
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hope,W.Bateman(Somerset,N.
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jackson, R. S.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kettle, Thomas Michael
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Lardner, James Carrige Rushe
Law, Hugh A. (Donegal, W.)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A.Levy(Essex,Harwich
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt.Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald,J.M.(Falkirk Bg'hs)
Maclean, Donald
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeigh,Charles (Donegal,E.)
M‘Callum, John M.
M‘Crae, George
M‘Kean, John
M‘Kenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald
M‘Killop, W.
M‘Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M‘Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M‘Micking, Major G.
Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Meagher, Michael
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alport
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murnaghan, George
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholson,CharlesN. (Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien,Kendal (TipperaryMid
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly,James (Roscommon,N
O'Malley, William
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pearson,W.H.M. (Suffolk,Eye)
Philipps,Col.Ivor (S'thampton)
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Pollard, Dr.
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Price,RobertJohn (Norfolk, E.)
Pullar, Sir Robert
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards,Thomas (W.Monm'th
Richardson, A.
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson,Rt. Hn. E. (Dundee)
Robertson,SirG.Scott (Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Schwann,SirC.E. (Manchester)
Scott,A.H.(Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smith,F.E. (Liverpool,Walton)
Smyth, Thomas F. (Leitrim, S.
Snowden, P.
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley,Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant,Sir Edward (Salisbury
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas,Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas,David Alfred(Merthyr
Thomasson, Franklin
Thompson,J.W.H. (Somerset,E
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Verney, F. W.
Wadsworth, J.
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walters, John Tudor
Walton, Sir John L. (Leeds, S.)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wardle, George J.
Waring, Walter
Wason,Rt.Hn.E.(Clackmannan
Wason,John Cathcart(Orkney)
Watt, Henry A.
Weir, James Galloway
Whitbread, Howard
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williamson, A.
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, Hon. C.H.W. (Hull,W)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson,J.W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Winfrey, R.
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Acland-Hood,RtHn.SirAlex. F.
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt.Hon.Sir H.
Balcarres, Lord

Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour,RtHn.A.J.(City Lond.)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry,N.)
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Boyle, Sir Edward
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. H. M.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cave, George
Cavendish,Rt.Hon.Victor C.W.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord R. (Marlyebone, E.)
Chamberlain,RtHn.J.A. (Worc
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Craig,Captain James(Down,E.)
Dixon-Hartland,Sir FredDixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duncan,Robert (Lanark,Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Faber, Capt. W. V. (Hants, W.)
Fell, Arthur
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Haddock, George R.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Helmsley, Viscount
Hervey,F.W.F.(BuryS. Edm'ds
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway,Rt.Hon. Sir JohnH.
Kenyon-Slaney,Rt.Hon.Col.W.
Keswick, William
King,SirHenrySeymour (Hull)
Lee,ArthurH. (Hants.,Fareham
Lockwood,Rt.Hn. Lt.-Col.A.R.
Long,Col. Charles W.(Evesham
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Sir Francis William
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Meysey-Thompson, E. C.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Moore, William
Morpeth, Viscount
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parker,Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Percy, Earl
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts,S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sheffield,SirBerkeleyGeorge D.
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Starkey, John R.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt.Hn.J.G.(Oxf'dUniv.
Thomson,W. Mitchell-(Lanark)
Turnour, Viscount
Valentia, Viscount
Walker,Col.W.H. (Lancashire)
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A.Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Hicks Beach and Mr. Bowles.

Clause 12:—

MR. MEYSEY THOMPSON (Staffordshire, Handsworth) said this clause took power to remit payment of the tax in certain cases, and he asked whether it included power to remit in a very hard case such as had come to his notice. The elder of two brothers succeeded to an estate, and long before the estate duties were paid he went to South Africa and was killed whilst fighting for his country in the South African War. Then the younger brother succeeded and another heavy fine had to be paid. He wished to know whether the right hon. Gentleman would take such cases into his consideration, and whether the duties in such a case would be remitted or reduced. A still harder case which had come to his knowledge was that of a man of sixty-seven years of age who succeeded to a life interest in a cottage, and he was naturally anxious to obtain possession and end his days in his own house.

*THE CHAIRMAN said he understood from the Minister in charge that the points now raised had nothing whatever to do with the clause before the House. Under those circumstatces it would not be in order to discuss them now.

MR. ASQUITH said he was always glad to consider cases of hardship in their proper place, but this clause had nothing to do with cases of this kind. It was a clause simply to give the Commissioners power to wipe off, as a bad debt, after twenty years, that portion of the tax which had not been paid.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 13 agreed to.

Clause 14:—

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that, as he understood, this clause was to deal with a temporary state of things, which was fast passing away. He wished to know what was the real object of the clause and how it would work, because so far as he could see there was neither advantage nor disadvantage in it. The matters with which it dealt would average themselves, and the right hon. Gentleman would get the same revenue whether the clause were passed or not.

MR. McKENNA was understood to say that the reason for the introduction of the clause was very simple. These inquiries as to the past value of a small portion of a large estate were extremely difficult to make. It was, in fact, impossible, to trace back what was the value at the time the duty was paid or payable, and the clause was justified on those grounds.

Sir F. BANBURY said that as far as he could gather from the explanation given by the right hon. Gentleman this clause was intended to simplify matters, but it seemed to him that it would have the opposite effect. The clause read—

> "The deduction to be allowed under Section 21 of the Finance Act, 1906, in respect of death duties previously put on property on which duty is payable, shall, instead of being the amount of the duty paid or payable, be the amount which would have been payable on account of the duty if the duty were calculated on the value of the property on which estate duty is payable."

To him it seemed that nothing could be clearer and simpler than the introduction of the words "amount paid." As far as he understood, a certain fixed sum was to be paid; and suppose an estate were divided into eight parts?

Mr. McKENNA stated that an estate would not be divided into eight parts. It would be subdivided, and that part of the property which had never been valued would be separately valued.

Sir F. BANBURY asked on what basis the inquiry was to be made.

Mr. McKENNA: The present value.

Sir F. BANBURY said that if the inquiry was to be made on the present value it seemed to be very hard where the value had decreased. Apparently it appeared to be the case that the object was to make calculations easier on real property. It would not be so difficult on personal property, but this applied to real property, and it certainly appeared to be very hard in that case.

Mr. McKENNA: It applies to personalty as well.

Sir F. BANBURY said there could be no difficulty in regard to personalty, but there was in reference to real property. It seemed to him, in view of the fact that there had been a considerable depreciation of the value of real property, that they would commit an injustice.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said there was a good deal of force in what the President of the Board of Education said, that these valuations had not been made at the expense of the payer of the tax, and that it would very often be better for him to adopt the proposal under this Act, even if he paid a little more in taxes, because he would pay less in inquiry expenses. But he did not think that that would always be the case, and as he had said before and as his hon. friend had said, it was very hard to make a change of this kind, which would be actually extorting more money against the will of the taxpayer than they had a claim upon him for. He wanted to suggest to the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he could not make the clause optional, giving the option to the payer of the tax to adopt it or not. In most cases, probably, in order to save the trouble and expense of an inquiry, the payer of the tax would be glad to adopt this method; but where there had been a serious depreciation and where, therefore, he would be a great loser, the old system would still remain open to him.

Mr. ASQUITH said the point of this clause was that it was a great deal more in the interest of the person who paid the tax than in the interest of the revenue authorities. Those who suffered the trouble and expense of the present system were obliged to go back and trace the history of a particular bit of property. That had been done by the person claiming the reduction, and it was a very great expense, as experience had shown. He knew the hon. Baronet was always open to argument, and he appealed to him, therefore, not to oppose the clause, as he would do a great deal of injury to a number of people whose interest he was most anxious to promote. As to the suggestion made by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, he would certainly take it into consideration. He could not, of course, be expected to say anything definite until he had consulted his advisers, but he would take into consideration whether there should be this option.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 15:—

Amendment proposed—

"In page 5, lines 22 and 23, to leave out the words 'after the passing of this Act,' and insert the words 'on or after the 19th day of April, 1907.' "—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Are we to have an explanation of the clause?

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said that under the Act of 1894 all property passing on death was aggregated without regard to the method in which it passed, and therefore property in regard to which a man had full control and full enjoyment, was aggregated with the form of settled property which he had not control over or the full enjoyment of. Thus the latter by increasing the aggregate amount might bring the whole property on to a higher scale of graduation. This was a legitimate grievance and one which the Bill would meet.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that in the case of a man with an estate of £45,000, as to £5,000 of which he had a life interest, if he left the £5,000 free of conditions to the heir, not putting him in possession of the life interest only, but giving it to him fully, he understood that was to be treated as separate estate, because the man who died had only a life interest in it. That was so, he understood. On the other hand, if the man who died had had full power over the £5,000, the property would be aggregated. In each case the treatment of the property would be governed by what was its condition at the moment of death.

Question put, and agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 16:—

Amendment proposed—

"In page 5, line 38, after the word 'licences,' insert the words '(including any duty charged under Subsection (1) of Section 8 of The Locomotives on Highways Act, 1896).' "—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and agreed to.

*THE CHAIRMAN: The next Amendment stands in the name of the hon. Member for Lincoln. He proposes to insert after "thereof" in line 5, in page 6, the words—

> "A fixed sum equal to the amount which was paid into that account as the proceeds of the duties on licences for the sale of intoxicating liquors by retail in the year ending the thirty-first day of March, nineteen hundred and seven, and in addition thereto."

I have looked at the Resolution governing this matter upon which the Bill is founded, and it is clear that under its terms it is possible that in certain contingencies the sum payable may be less than what is proposed in the Amendment. The object of the Amendment is to provide that more than is authorised by the Resolution may be paid, and therefore because it may involve an increased charge the Amendment is not in order.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN submitted that what was proposed was not really a new charge. The Resolution made it impossible to alter existing charges, but the Amendment would not impose any increased charge. All it would do would be to prevent the charge from falling below the present sum. Would it not be in order to move an Amendment of that kind not necessarily founded upon the Resolution but upon the fact that the larger charge was by a Resolution of this House?

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not think it is quite the case that a larger charge is already in force. What the hon. Member proposes, and what is suggested by other Amendments on the Paper of this kind, is, in my opinion, beyond what the Resolution authorises.

MR. ASQUITH said that his recollection of the Resolution was that the only thing it authorised was the transfer of a sum equal and not greater or less.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London) said he understood that, by the practice of the House, Bills dealing with money could only be introduced by a Resolution, and when the Bill came under discussion no change could be made in it which suggested a larger charge than the original Resolution. That was the constitutional practice.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer had laid down that the Resolution on which this Bill was founded did not merely put a superior limit to the charge but laid down that it should be equal, precisely and exactly. Surely that was binding them by a Resolution which was outside and beyond the ordinary practice. The policy of having a preliminary Resolution was one which was open to question, but it would become a great abuse if they were prevented after the Resolution was passed from diminishing the charge. Was the doctrine to be that a preliminary Resolution could fix the charge at a level which not only could not be increased but could not be diminished whatever the Committee might desire to do?

MR. ASQUITH said this was not a question of altering a charge, but simply a question of a transfer. All that was authorised by the Resolution was that a sum equal to the amount which would have been left should be the subject of that transfer.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I think the Leader of the Opposition is absolutely right. It would be quite in order to reduce the amount, but it is not in order to increase it.

MR. LEIF JONES (Westmoreland, Appleby) asked if it would be in order to move to add the words, "Provided that this section shall not apply to licences for the sale of intoxicating liquors." That would raise the same point but in a somewhat different form.

*THE CHAIRMAN: Will the hon. Member state where he means those words to come in?

MR. LEIF JONES: At the end of Sub-section 2.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I do not think that would have the effect which the hon. Member desires. I think the best way would be to discuss this matter on the question that the clause stand part of the Bill.

MR. McKENNA pointed out that this clause did not impose a charge at all. All it did was to provide for the transfer of an existing charge from one account to another, and that was governed by the Resolution of the House.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said this was a substantial point, and could only be raised upon an Amendment of this kind. His hon. friends, for reasons which they had not yet been able to explain, desired that a portion of the transfer which the right hon. Gentleman was proposing should not be sanctioned. There was no question of increasing, or lowering, or even altering the charge. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was proposing that certain sums now payable out of one account should henceforth be payable out of another account. For reasons of his own his hon. friend desired to move that some portion should not be transferred from the old account to the new account. He thought that would be in order, and it was a point which could only be dealt with by an Amendment.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) suggested that the proper course was to wait until some particular Amendment was moved in a particular place, and then it would be competent for anyone to ask for the ruling of the Chairman.

*THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Lincoln did put a particular Amendment to me and I ruled it out of order. The only Amendment on the Paper which is in order at this point is that of the hon. Member for Yarmouth.

[THE CHAIRMAN, on being asked again whether the alternative Amendment suggested by the hon. Member for Appleby was in order, said that it was in order from his point of view. He merely suggested that it did not carry out what the hon. Member desired. That was, however, a matter of merits, not of order.]

*MR. LEIF JONES moved to add to Sub-section 2 a proviso "that this sub-section shall not apply to licences for the sale of intoxicating liquors." He had every sympathy with the desire of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to regain control of the sums allocated to local authorities, but he wished to fix the amount to be paid in lieu of the duties on licences for the sale of intoxicating liquors. An effort was being made all over the country to reduce the number of liquor licences, and the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer would tend in the opposite direction.

MR. ASQUITH: No.

*MR. LEIF JONES said that was the effect of the proposal as it stood. The reason why he wanted a fixed sum rather than the present arrangement was that where the justices reduced the number of licences they also reduced the return to the local authorities from licences. Therefore there might be a desire in a locality not to have the number of licences reduced, because by the reduction they lost the contribution which they would otherwise receive. There was thus a force in operation militating against the reduction of licences, and it was because he wanted to facilitate the reduction that he said there should be no temptation for the local justices not to reduce the number, and that the local justices, who were charged with the duty of reducing licences, should have a free hand to do so without feeling that in reducing the number they would be reducing the sum which came to the local authority for the relief of rates.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 6, line 7, at the end, to insert the words, 'Provided that this sub-section shall not apply to licences for the sale of intoxicating liquors.'"—(*Mr. Leif Jones.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. ASQUITH said he did not think the clause would have the effect which the hon. Member attributed to it. Moreover, if the Amendment were carried it would defeat the hon. Member's object. The clause merely left matters exactly as they were and dissociated once for all the revenue contributed by the Imperial Exchequer to local resources from the proceeds of these licences, so that Parliament would be free to deal with these duties in the general interest without diminishing the revenue of local authorities or disturbing the distribution of the Imperial contribution. It was the fixed intention of the Government to deal with this question next year, and the whole object of this clause was to preserve the *status quo* in the meantime.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he did not approach the question from the same point of view as the hon. Member for the Appleby Division, who looked at it as a matter of temperance legislation. He was looking at it from the point of view of revenue to the local authority. The Chancellor of the Exchequer desired to leave the local authority in as advantageous a position as it would have been in if this clause had not been included in the Bill; but if that were so, if the kind of legislation which they all knew to be desired by the hon. Member for Appleby was passed, and if he could realise the wishes he had expressed in this House in regard to Imperial taxation, he would crush out a large number of licensed houses. In a debate on this very Bill in an earlier portion of the session the hon. Member stated that the object at which he was aiming was the destruction of a number of the smaller houses, which did not pay well, by increasing their licence duty. If this clause did not pass, what the local authority lost by the destruction of the small houses it might gain by the increased duty receivable from larger houses. The local authority might thus be recouped in the increased duty payable by the larger houses, but if the Chancellor of the Exchequer's proposal was carried, all that recoupment would go, not to the local authority which had to lose it, but to the Exchequer. The local authority therefore did stand the real risk of being worse off in consequence of the change which the right hon. Gentleman was making.

MR. ASQUITH said that supposing they introduced legislation raising the duty the local authority would suffer in exactly the same way if this clause was not in the Bill at all.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN thought that that depended on the persons to whom they assigned the produce of the increased duties. If they simply, as a matter of licensing reform, raised the duties now, and crushed out the small houses and the local authorities lost the duties on them, they could recoup themselves by the higher duties which they charged on the remaining houses; but if they said, as the Government did say now, that any higher duty should henceforth go to the Exchequer, then the local authorities would in that contingency undoubtedly receive less in consequence of the change which the right hon. Gentleman was making. They would receive the old rate of licence duty.

MR. ASQUITH: So they would have done if this clause had never been introduced at all.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said the right hon. Gentleman had altered the system of imposing the licence duty and taken to the Exchequer the whole of the increase of the duty, but he put in this clause in order to set his hands free for that purpose.

MR. ASQUITH: Not quite. If the law remains as it is all that I shall be able to do is to get the increase. What I do by this clause is to get the whole into the Imperial Exchequer, and the local authority is not put in a worse position by the clause.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that it was not the clause that put the local authority in a worse position. He appealed on behalf of the local authorities against what the right hon. Gentleman proposed to do by the clause itself and by the legislation which he had adumbrated. He did not think the right hon. Gentleman had considered the case of the local authority. If he was going to leave them worse off in respect of these licences he thought he ought to make a contribution from some other source.

MR. ASQUITH: I think so too.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: That is a satisfactory answer so far as I am concerned.

Mr. Austen Chamberlain.

MR. ASQUITH said he thought so, subject to this, without prejudice, that he could not agree that the present system of contribution to local resources was to be regarded as fixed and unchangeable. He thought hon. Gentlemen opposite did not think it very adequate. It must not be understood that he committed himself to the opinion that the proportionate amounts received by the local authorities must remain as they were now; they might be changed. But he did not intend to diminish the contribution by any provision in this Bill.

SIR F. BANBURY said he was very much obliged to his hon. friend for introducing this Amendment which he intended to support. The hon. Member had stated that in his opinion the justices would cease their efforts to diminish the number of licences because by doing so they would lose a certain amount of money for the relief of the rates.

*MR. LEIF JONES said he did not say that the justices would entirely cease their efforts at reduction, but that the present system tended in that direction.

SIR F. BANBURY said that, of course, the magistrates would do their duty when any case came before them irrespective of what would affect their own or anybody else's pocket. But he was going to support the Amendment for a very different reason from that urged by the hon. Gentleman. His idea was that the Amendment would be an exceedingly good one from the point of view of the interest of the brewer and the publican. He believed that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would like to increase his taxation in the following year and at the same time satisfy his friends by aiming a blow at the brewers and the publicans. But the right hon. Gentleman would be likely to put the result of that blow into his own pocket, and not into the pocket of the local authorities. He was one of those who thought that the brewer and the publican were sufficiently taxed at the present moment, and under these circumstances if the hon. Gentleman withdrew his Amendment he would object, and it would be very pleasant to carry it with the aid of the temperance party.

*MR. HICKS BEACH (Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury) said he supported the Amendment, but not for the reasons stated by his hon. friend or the hon. Member who moved it. If the Amendment were not carried the profits from the increase of the licence duties would go not to the local authorities but to the Imperial revenue. If these duties were largely increased there would be fewer licences and the contribution to the local authorities would be less than the amount now derived from these licences, because it would be calculated on a diminished number of licences, not at the new scale of duty but at the rate of the licence duty at present in force. Moreover, the Chancellor of the Exchequer by removing this area of taxation from the local authorities was taking away a portion of what the Royal Commission on local taxation had declared to be the property of the local ratepayers and one which could be utilised to give considerable relief to local taxation. And the Royal Commission had specially singled out the licences to hotels, the rate on which they said might be very substantially increased without any great hardship. The local authorities ought not to surrender this property without receiving an assurance that they would receive not only an equivalent grant but an increased grant.

*MR. CHARLES ROBERTS (Lincoln) said that he was glad that his friend the Member for Appleby had raised this discussion, but he could not support his Amendment. He agreed with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and his only quarrel with the right hon. Gentleman —if quarrel it were—was that by this Bill he was not going to do to-day what he intended to do to-morrow. He only hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would carry out in the future what he desired at the present time. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had said that his present proposal was intended to disentangle the local finance from its connection with licences. His objection to the Bill was that it did not do that. The only effect would be an improvement in bookkeeping; and when the Bill became law there would be the same entanglement as existed at present. Still he thanked the Chancellor of the Exchequer for his assurance that the disentanglement would be effected at a later time.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN said that the remarks of the hon. Gentleman did not apply to the Amendment before the Committee.

MR. LEIF JONES said that having received a satisfactory statement from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, he would ask leave to withdraw his Amendment. He might explain that his motive in moving it was entirely in the interest of the local authorities.

Leave to withdraw, being refused,

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 47; Noes, 234. (Division List No. 262.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Rt Hn. Sir Alex. F.
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Ashley, W. W.
Balcarres, Lord
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.)
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. H. M.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt. Hon. Victor C. W.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Coates, E. Feetham (Lewisham
Dalrymple, Viscount
Dobson, Thomas W.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Fell, Arthur
Forster, Henry William
Gordon, J.
Haddock, George R.
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Hervey, F. W. F. (Bury S. Edm'ds
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Houston, Robert Paterson
King, Sir Henry Seymour (Hull)
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Meysey-Thompson, E. C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Parkes, Ebenezer
Rawlinson, John Frederick Peel
Remnant, James Farquharson
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Starkey, John R.
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Turnour, Viscount
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Frederick Banbury and Mr. Hicks Beach.

NOES.

Abraham,William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Adkins, W. Ryland D.
Agnew, George William
Alden, Percy
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Asquith,Rt.Hon.HerbertHenry
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker,JosephA.(Finsbury,E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Barker, John
Barlow,SirJohn E.(Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry,RedmondJ.(Tyrone,N.)
Beck, A. Cecil
Bell, Richard
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell,SirJ.H.(Essex,Romf'rd
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Sir Alfred
Black, Arthur W.
Boulton, A. C. F.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner,J.F.L.(Lancs.,Leigh)
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton,Rt.Hn.SydneyCharles
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Cameron, Robert
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins,SirWm.J.(S.Pancras,W.
Corbett,A.Cameron(Glasgow)
Corbett,CH(Sussex,E.Grinst'd)
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Davies, Ellis William (Eifion)
Davies, W. Howell(Bristol, S.)
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dewar,SirJ.A.(Inverness-sh.)
Dickinson,W.H.(St.Pancras,N.
Duckworth, James
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Esslemont, George Birnie
Evans, Samuel T.
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alexander
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gill, A. H.
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon,RtHn.Sir W.Brampton
Hall, Frederick
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harvey,W. E.(Derbyshire,N.E.
Harwood, George
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson,J.M. (Aberdeen,W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Hobart, Sir Robert
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope,W.Bateman(Somerset,N.
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Jackson, R. S.
Johnson, John (Gateshead
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones,SirD. Brynmor(Swansea)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones,William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lamont, Norman
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever,A.Levy(Essex,Harwich)
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lynch, H. B.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeigh,Charles (Donegal,E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield,H.Rendall(Lincoln)
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Meagher, Michael
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alport
Montagu, E. S.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan,J.Lloyd(Carmarthen)
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murnaghan, George
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts., Bassetlaw)
Nicholson,CharlesN. (Doncast'r
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien,Kendal (TipperaryMid
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Malley, William
Parker, James (Halifax)
Pearce, Robert (Staffs., Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pearson,SirW.D.(Colchester)
Philipps,J.Wynford (Pembroke
Pollard, Dr.
Price, C.E.(Edinb'gh,Central)
Price,RobertJohn(Norfolk,E.)
Priestley, Arthur (Grantham)
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rendall, Athelstan
Renton, Major Leslie
Richardson, A.
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Robertson,SirG.Scott (Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Runciman, Walter
Schwann,SirC.E.(Manchester)
Scott,A.H.(Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Snowden, P.
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley,Hn.A.Lyulph(Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas,SirA(Glamorgan,E.)
Thomas,DavidAlfred(Merthyr
Thompson,J.W.H.(Somerset,E.
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Ure, Alexander
Wadsworth, J.
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walters, John Tudor
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)

Ward, W. Dudley (Southampton
Wardle, George J.
Waring, Walter
Waterlow, D. S.
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Wilson, Hon. C.H.W. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Winfrey, R.
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

And it being a quarter past Eight of the clock, and there being Private Business set down by direction of the Chairman of Ways and Means, under Standing Order No. 8, further proceeding was postponed without Question put.

HUMBER CONSERVANCY BILL [LORDS] (BY ORDER).

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*MAJOR RENTON (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough) said that in rising to move that this Bill be read a second time upon that day three months he did not wish to address the House on the merits of the Bill as it affected the Humber. The whole question which he wished to present turned upon the way in which the Bill dealt with the River Trent. They had made every effort to meet objections which were made to their proposals, but they had been met each time with a *non possumus*, and that was why they were compelled to oppose the Bill on this occasion. He occupied, probably, for the first and last time, the unique position of representing every solitary member of his constituency, no matter to what shade of politics he might happen to belong. This Bill, in his opinion, sought to introduce an exceedingly vicious system into our Private Bill legislation. He would not trouble the House with the various enactments concerning the Humber they had had in the last fifty years, but the House would remember that in 1905 a Bill was passed in which it was set out that within six months it was obligatory that a Committee of the Board of Trade should be appointed to inquire into the conservancy of the Humber. That Committee was appointed by Lord Salisbury, the then President of the Board of Trade, and he would ask the House to remember that in his Minute appointing the Committee there was not one word about the River Trent, and it was owing to the fact that the River Trent was introduced into this Bill that their whole opposition was aroused. The Minute on which they based their opposition was dated the 9th of November, 1905, and it authorised an inquiry as to the constitution of the Commissioners of the Humber and the powers and jurisdiction vested in them. It was alleged that the present Bill was founded on the Report of that Committee, but that was, he ventured to say, an utter fallacy, and something entirely fantastic, because the River Trent *qua* the River Trent was never mentioned before the Committee from the beginning to the end of the inquiry, and the Committee themselves in their report said that they had no power to recommend anything in regard to the River Trent. To say, therefore, that the Bill as regarded the Trent was founded on the Report of the Board of Trade Committee was to allege something which could not be substantiated by anything whatsoever. In the advertisement of the inquiry to be held by the Committee the Trent was never referred to and the matter never came to the cognisance of the Lindsey or Nottinghamshire County Councils at all, and they consequently never appeared before the Committee. It was true that the council of the town of Nottingham appeared before the Committee, but that had nothing to do with the case at all, because they only appeared in regard to certain ancient rights which they had had over the Humber dating back for many years. In some respects the Bill was founded on the Report of the Committee, because they recommended that a board should be appointed consisting of thirty-six members. The promoters of this Bill said now that the Board of Trade Committee having appointed those thirty-six members, if they added one to the board they would upset the whole arrangement made by the Committee. He would point out that other tribunals more august than Committees of the Board of Trade were liable to have their decisions reversed, and that there was nothing in the number thirty-six which was so mystic or so cryptic that it could not be altered. Surely it was not beyond the wit of man to devise a board which should consist of a different number of men. The provisions of the Bill were entirely without precedent, and if it was passed the River Trent would be the only river in England which would have no representation on the Conservancy authority having control over it. Not a single representative from the districts through which the Trent passed was to be granted, and the county councils were not allowed to have any members on the board. There were two reasons why it was inopportune to include the Trent in the scope of this Bill. The Trent Navigation Committee obtained an Act last session, to enable them to make and improve the navigation. In the second place a Royal Commission was now sitting to inquire into canals and waterways. That Commission would no doubt have some very important recommendations to make concerning the River Trent, which was a very important river. The Trent was the third largest watershed in the United Kingdom; yet under this Bill no power was given to make necessary works. But it was said that there were occasional wrecks in the Trent, which made navigation dangerous; but those who stated that failed to produce any proof of such wrecks before the House of Lords Committee. There might be wrecks, but all he could say was that if there were, those who navigated that river year by year and month by month had no cognisance of them. The promoters of the Bill tried to prove there were many wrecks on the Trent. One of their witnesses was forced to admit that he had not been on that river for forty years. Then it was also alleged that there were no lights on the Trent, but in regard to that Hull Trinity House had had powers for many years to light the Trent if necessary, and the mere fact that they had not carried out this work proved conclusively that lights were not necessary on the Trent. Those whose business took them up and down that river said that lights were not necessary, and that if the Trent were lighted it would only tend to confuse them. He thought it would be a great mistake to hand over the Trent to this foreign body. To start with, Hull was situated a very long way away from Gainsborough. Gainsborough was one of the principal towns on the Trent. It was a day's journey from Gainsborough to Hull, and he did not think that Hull would study the interests of the Trent or Gainsborough in any degree. It would not be to their interest that the Trent should become a great trading highway, and he would ask the House to remember that there were great possibilities for the Trent in the future. Those living in the district would not object, but would welcome a board being formed to undertake the management of the river, but such a Conservancy Board ought to manage the whole river, and any body which had the control of the river ought to have its offices on the banks of the river itself and not miles away in a town which it was a day's journey to reach. The competition between the Humber and the Trent was very real indeed and would be much more acute in the future. He did not think it would be either fair or just to hand over the river to the proposed board. He thought he had shown that it was not in the interests of the Trent itself that it should be handed over to the Humber Conservancy, and he had shown on the other hand that it was entirely unnecessary. If the Hull people were to have jurisdiction right up to Gainsborough, why should they not have jurisdiction up to Nottingham? Why stop at Gainsborough? The Trent was navigable up to Nottingham, and surely in the name of common sense they should take the whole and not a part, so that in the future there should be no divided jurisdiction in regard to this important river. If it was necessary to take the river over, he submitted it was necessary that the riparian county councils interested should each have a member on the proposed body. The recent Commission on the Thames Conservancy reported that every county council through whose district the Thames passed had a representative on the Conservancy Board. Then why should the Trent be put into the unique position of being the only river in England which had no

Major Renton.

representative of its own on the body having jurisdiction over the river? All they asked for was that the Trent should be treated in the same way as the Thames and other rivers of the country. There was a special reason why some representative of the county council should be behind the scenes and see what was going on. The land through which this river ran was below the river level, and if there was a flood by any chance coming down the river which, owing to dredging operations having taken place, burst the banks, it would have a most disastrous effect on the low-lying country around and a most injurious effect on the rateable value of property. The primary function of the Trent was to drain the land through which it passed, and it would be most dangerous to hand over the river to a body far away without any representative upon it of those most concerned in its efficient government. He had put the facts as briefly as he could before the House. He could only say in conclusion that those who lived in the districts of Gainsborough and Nottingham viewed this matter very seriously indeed, and he hoped the House would hesitate and ponder carefully before it handed over to a foreign body the control of this river.

MR. NEWNES (Nottinghamshire, Bassetlaw), in seconding the Amendment, supported his hon. friend in the line he had taken. The hon. Member for Gainsborough represented a Lincolnshire division and he represented a Nottingham division, and the interests of the county councils of the two counties were exactly the same. They desired to work in this matter on similar lines. They had no desire to interfere in the co-ordination of the authorities on the River Humber, or with the management of their affairs. But they desired to interfere in the matter because a clause in the Bill now before the House gave to the Humber Board control over the Trent. The hon. Member for Gainsborough had dealt with the history of the matter, and therefore there was no need for him to deal with it. As the House was aware. this Bill was brought forward on the question of the co-ordination of the different authorities on the Humber. The Report of the Committee recommended the formation of a board with thirty-six-representatives of different towns and dock companies and other interests on the Humber, who were to have representation in proportion to their interests. Although twenty-five miles of the Trent had been handed over to the control of this body no representation had been given to the county councils on either side of that river. It was said that the county councils, and the Nottinghamshire County Council for whom he spoke more particularly, should have appeared before the Commission when they were taking evidence on the question. They did not do so because they were not aware at the time that there was any intention or desire to include the River Trent under this new authority, the Humber Conservancy Board. Had they been aware of it they would have taken proper steps to appear before the Commission. They did not know the Trent would be included until the Bill was published, and then they took the necessary steps to oppose the Bill at every stage, and they had passed resolutions at their own meetings in the country against the Bill, on the ground that it did not give representation to them. It was quite true that the Corporation of Nottingham appeared before the Commission, but as his hon. friend had said, they appeared because they had certain existing rights. They did not know at the time they gave their evidence that there was any intention whatever to include the Trent and bring it under the control of this body, and they did not give evidence before the Commission on that point. They desired to be associated with the Nottinghamshire County Council in this matter and were prepared to regard whatever representation was given to Nottinghamshire as representing themselves as well. The question of the Trent never properly came before the Commission. It was mentioned only incidentally. The River Trent was not a small tributary of the Humber. It was, on the contrary, a large and important river and one of the chief waterways from the Midlands to the eastern counties. A Royal Commission was now sitting to inquire into the whole question of waterways, and it was felt that no proper scheme for the regulation of the waterways could be made in which the River Trent would not occupy a great position. It would be a very dangerous thing to hand over twenty-five miles of this river nearest the mouth to another body. It could not be said that the interests of the Humber and the Trent were identical, or that a board which was formed for controlling the Humber would necessarily be a board which should control the Trent. Since the matter had been before Parliament he had taken the opportunity of speaking to people living on the banks of the Trent—manufacturers and others—upon the matter, and their interest in it was very great. It was felt that the interests of the Trent were being handed over to a board whose interests were practically in another river. It was also felt that on that board a large representation was given to the railway companies, whose interests would not be the same as those of the Trent. Many of the railway companies of the district were to have not only direct representation but also representation in connection with their interests in dock and other companies, and the whole body was looked upon in Nottingham as a railway board. The people engaged in trade on the Trent had used that river as a means of transporting their goods to and from their warehouses and factories, and if anything were done in the way of neglecting the Trent and preventing its being useful for navigation it was felt that that would be done to throw the trade more and more into the hands of the railway companies. They only asked that the riparian county councils should be represented on the board—not that they should be in a majority, but that they should, at all events, have a right to speak in the interests of the people living in their districts. It was said, he believed, by their opponents that that could not be done, because the Conservancy Board of thirty-six members had been so formed that all the different interests on the Humber were properly represented, there being not one with a preponderating influence, and that if representation were given to those for whom he spoke the balance of power would be altered. If the interests of these different bodies on the Humber were so conflicting that the slightest alteration would upset the working of the board, he was afraid that the prospects of its successful working were not very rosy. But they hardly thought that such could be the case, and they really felt that representation ought to be given to counties like Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire, having regard to the large number of interests they had in the river. The promoters had so far not been able to meet them in the matter, and that was why they were taking the course they were now adopting. He, therefore, had great pleasure in seconding the rejection of this Bill.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now' and at the end of the Question to add the words, 'this day three months.'"—(*Major Renton.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Sir **SEYMOUR KING** (Hull, Central) said that from the observations which had been made it was obvious that the questions raised were more questions for consideration in a Committee room upstairs than for discussion on the Second Reading. One question was whether a little more or a little less representation ought to be given to the interests which the hon. Members represented. He thought that the House was entitled to hear a little more on that question than had been vouchsafed by the opponents of the Bill. They had talked of the River Trent, which they had likened to the Thames, as though it was a river of vast and potential character with large steamers going to and fro. Hon. Members had come before the House asking, if he might venture to say so, to be put on an equality with representatives of the Humber, though they were people who for the last thirty years had decidedly neglected their duty. They had twenty-five miles of the Trent, and in 1885 he found that a Report was made by Captain Jarrard to Sir Hickman Bacon on the very question of the twenty-five miles of the Humber with which they were now dealing. The twenty-five miles in question was not the upper part of the Humber but the lower part of the Trent from the

Trent Falls to Gainsborough Bridge. In the Report made in 1885, the following statement occurred. Captain Jarrard said first of all that he had paid the greatest attention to the River Trent, and that at low water ships drawing 2 feet 6 inches of water went ashore. There was their River Thames! Two feet 6 inches of water was enough to accommodate the riparian constituencies which these hon. Members represented. Captain Jarrard, writing from Gainsborough in 1885, in the month of June, spoke of the flagrant neglect which permitted a railway bridge to cross the river at a most obviously obstructive place, and he said—

> "Viewing the river in its present most unsatisfactory state, the necessity for placing it under proper control, and of providing for its conservancy is at once apparent, and cannot be too strongly urged as a matter of vital importance to all owners of land bordering on the Trent as well as those interested in the river traffic."

By the way, in regard to the land, he noticed it was stated that the land was lower than the river itself, which would be a curious circumstance if it were correct, but as a matter of fact the land was two feet above the river. For two and twenty years this twenty-five miles of river had been derelict. It had been under the Trinity House jurisdiction only so far as pilotage was concerned; but as regarded the moving of wrecks, of which the hon. Gentleman the Member for Gainsborough had spoken specially, the Board of Trade, who he thought knew as much as the hon. Member for Gainsborough, said in a Report, dated 1895—

> "On this portion of the river Trent—over twenty miles in length—lying between the jurisdiction of the Trent Navigation Company and the Humber Conservancy Commissioners, there is at present no body entrusted with the conservancy of the navigation. The need for such an authority which would have power to deal with sunken wrecks and other obstructions to navigation, has been experienced on several occasions, and the Board of Trade consider that the establishment of a navigation authority for this portion of the tidal river would be for the public benefit."

Repeated representations had been made to the Humber Conservancy and to the Hull Trinity House to remove the wrecks, but on each of these occasions they had had to say that they would be delighted to remove the wrecks if they had any jurisdiction whatever. They had no jurisdiction. Twenty-two years had passed; these gentlemen had a depth of 2 feet 6 inches at low water, and they had left the river alone. Nearly all the traffic originated in the lower river Humber and went up the Trent. It originated at Goole, Grimsby and Hull, and nearly the whole of that traffic went up the river as far as Nottingham; and it was because the Humber Conservancy had no statutory powers or orders imposed upon them by Parliament that they now came to the House to ask to be enabled to carry out the findings of the Commission of the Board of Trade. Because they did this, suddenly the Lindsey Division of Nottinghamshire and the County Council sprang up with delight and said: "Oh, there is something worth having; let us have a finger in the pie." What were they contributing to the great cost incurred by the Conservancy? It was calculated that if the Conservancy buoyed and lighted the river up to Gainsborough Bridge, and the sea-going vessels went up there, they might impose 3d. per ton on those sea going-vessels, of which 1⅗d. per ton would be for the Trent navigation. The total of the traffic on the Trent would mean about £150 a year. It was ludicrous to come down to the House and suggest that they should block a Bill of this importance on the Second Reading without giving it the chance of being sent upstairs to be heard by a Committee before whom they could obtain a *locus standi*. The town of Hull, which he represented, had a serious grievance against the Bill of the Humber Conservancy; they did not consider that they had sufficient representation, and there were many reasons on which they were opposing this Bill; but they had written to him to say that though there were these many serious questions at issue, they desired that the Bill should go before a Committee. He thought it only right to say to the House that, after all, the town of Hull had the most substantial interests affected by this Bill, and their grievance was not merely with regard to representation; they had also a very large income which they derived by Royal Charter, and which they had had for six or seven hundred years. That was to be taken away from them; but though they had these serious questions at issue, yet the people of Hull were anxious that the Bill should be read a second time, and that it should go to a Committee upstairs. Let them look for a moment at the position in which they found themselves. The Humber Conservancy in 1905 came to the House and asked for certain facilities and certain rights. They were granted, on certain specific statutory conditions. They were told: "Very well, you shall have what you ask, but only on condition that the Board of Trade shall inquire into the various needs of the Humber and its immediate tributaries, and that you shall within six months of the findings of the Committee bring a Bill into the House of Commons to carry out the findings." The Humber Conservancy were now before the House in obedience to the will of the House, to carry out the statutory obligations laid upon them. It had been said that there was nothing in the Report of that Commission referring to the River Trent. They had only to look and see. They said that it was quite true that in their reference the River Trent was not expressly mentioned, but they added—

> "We probably have no jurisdiction to recommend (in the sense that the Humber Conservancy Commissioners are bound to carry out such a recommendation) any transfer of the pilotage authority of the Hull Trinity House except so far as that is exercised in the Humber properly so called. But we see no reason why we should not point out that if the pilotage authority on the river Humber is to be vested in the Conservancy, it will be desirable to transfer to the same authority the whole of the pilotage jurisdiction now exercised by the Hull Trinity House in the Trent."

At this very moment the Hull Trinity House exercised pilotage authority on the Trent. Then as to the buoying and lighting of the Trent, the Commission said—

> "We are of opinion that the powers of the Hull Trinity House as the authority for buoying, beaconing and lighting the river Humber should be transferred to the new conservancy authority. We think that it is expedient that any power and authority which the Trinity House may possess of a similar kind in respect of the Trent should also be transferred to the new conservancy authority."

MR. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): Will the hon. Gentleman kindly refer to the page from which he is quoting?

SIR SEYMOUR KING: It is p. 89; and again at p. 202—

> "We have also suggested certain extensions of powers as regards jurisdiction outside the Humber, especially over the Trent, which we consider will have to be transferred to the Commissioners as the logical consequences of the change we propose."

That was their recommendation, and the Bill itself had received the strong endorsement of the Board of Trade. The Board of Trade Report, of which he had already read a portion, said that the wrecks question, which the hon. Member had minimised so much, possibly because he had never been inconvenienced by them, ought to be entrusted to this one authority. It was absurd to think of cutting up authorities. The Hull Trinity House at this moment was the pilotage authority from the Trent Falls to Gainsborough Bridge. If they prevented this arrangement, the Hull Trinity House would still remain the pilotage authority for that district, without a separate Act of Parliament being brought in. Then they would have the extraordinary thing of charging every quay up the Humber 5s. per annum as a licence to trade in the upper reaches of the Humber, and as soon as they got up to the River Trent there would be no one to look after their interests to buoy, beacon, and light the river. Of all the grotesque suggestions they had ever heard that was the worst. Anyone who had anything to do with the navigating of rivers and the management of ships, regarded it as the most extraordinary proposition ever heard—that there should be no lighting or buoying of this portion of the Trent.

AN HON. MEMBER: Has the hon. Gentleman read the evidence before the House of Lords on this subject?

SIR SEYMOUR KING said that they all knew what class of evidence was brought forward on the part of one side or the other. It was expert evidence which was always drawn to the direction of the side which had called it. He was speaking as a man of considerable knowledge of rivers, estuaries, and seas, and he would not suggest for one moment that a river was better without being buoyed, beaconed, and lighted, for to say such a thing was to say what any capable navigator knew not to be correct. The fact was that the Trent was not the only river which joined it, because the Ouse came in, and there were many much more important places concerned than Nottingham and Gainsborough, such as York, Leeds, Bradford, and other places, all of which claimed representation. The East and West Riding both claimed representation, as well as the Coalowners' Association. If they once opened the sluice gates of representation there was no limit which they could fix, and he could not imagine where it would stop. The Commission worked out most carefully a representation, and for anybody to say that it was only a representation of railroads could only be the result of not having carefully studied the representation as it would exist under the new board. Under the old board he agreed that the railway companies and the dock companies had too much representation. Under the old board the municipalities of Hull and Grimsby had five representatives, Hull four and Grimsby one. The railway companies and navigation authority had twelve representatives; Trinity House, Hull, four; the shipowners, seven; and the Board of Trade could nominate four. Under the new Board, the municipalities of Hull, Grimsby, and Goole would each have one representative; the railway companies would get five; Trinity House, six; the shipowners, who were mostly interested, thirteen; the traders appointed by the Chambers of Commerce representing Hull, Grimsby, and Goole six; and the Board of Trade three. It would be seen that this was an attempt to accomplish the delicate task of balancing the representaion between the Upper and the Lower Humber, and if they gave any advantage to either one or the other by interfering with a scheme of representation which was the result of delicate negotiations and careful inquiry by impartial authorities appointed by the Board of Trade, during which the whole matter had been fought out between the various conflicting interests, they would at once set chaos loose, and this Bill, which was of the utmost consequence to the Humber, and to all who used the Humber, must go to the wall. It was impossible for the Humber Conservancy Board to assent to the propositions put forward to add this or that. If they allowed one in from Lindsey, or one from Gainsborough, they would have all the other small towns claiming that they had as much interest in the matter as Gainsborough. As for Lindsey, that place never took any interest in the matter until it was stirred up to do so. The truth was that the opposition all came from Nottingham. It was quite a peaceable, harmonious entertainment until the Nottingham lambs had come in to break up the harmony. There was not the slightest desire to do anything but good to the Trent, and they were not placing any further tax upon the traffic using the Trent They wanted to rescue this derelict and make it useful. The only way of reaching Gainsborough was by a railway, and it was almost pitiful to read the account of the River Trent traffic in 1865, and it had not improved since. It spoke of drunken pilots upon excursion boats with hundreds of passengers running ashore and apparently enjoying it because they were too drunk to appreciate the danger. The same account spoke of passenger steamers just missing by an inch the railway bridge which, had it been struck, would have turned over at once That was the state in which those places on both sides of the river allowed this precious river, equal to the Thames and quite as important to the districts it flowed through, to remain in until Hull, Grimsby, and Goole took the matter in hand and tried to do a little good for them. He hoped the House would give a Second Reading to the Bill, and whatever objections hon. Members might have to its details could be dealt with upstairs. If their claims were not then satisfied they could renew the discussion on the next stage, and by that time the House would be more fully informed as to the reasons why the Bill was recommended to the House.

*MR. COMPTON RICKETT (Yorkshire, W.R., Osgoldcross) said that unfortunately the Trent brought down a great deal more than the limited traffic that trickled down its course to the Humber. There was a very large amount of mud deposited where the Ouse and the Trent joined, and there was a most serious obstruction to traffic, caused largely by the accumulation of the mud brought down by the river Trent. All that the Conservancy Board proposed to do was to extend their authority for twenty-five miles upon a section of the Trent, not so much for the sake of controlling the Trent as to be masters of the navigation on the Ouse. Perhaps the House was not aware that there was an increasing traffic on the Ouse, and consequently traffic on the Upper Humber concentrated itself at Goole where the canal and the river Don united with the Ouse itself, and where the docks were being enlarged and railway accommodation was developing. At this point the coal traffic alone had gone up by leaps and bounds, and at the present moment it was about 2,000,000 tons a year. Consequently the interests of Goole were threatened through the blocking of the Humber at the entrance where the Trent and the Ouse united. Very frequently, on account of the accumulation of mud there, the steamers coming down from Goole lost the tide. The tendency at the present time was to increase the size of steamers for economy of working, and consequently the draught of these larger vessels demanded a clearer channel. As regarded the question of representation, surely the town of York had a great deal more interest in the matter than Nottingham or Gainsborough, and although York had applied for representation, that claim had been dropped. Leeds and Bradford were also interested in the waterways that lead down into Goole, and if representation was extended to the places along the feeders of the Trent they might also take in a great part of Yorkshire and Lincolnshire as well as Nottinghamshire. In fact it would in this way reduce the representation on the Conservancy to a farce. If there was any case to be made out for the claims which had been put forward in this debate, they might safely be left for argument upstairs. He hoped the difficulties which at present were experienced and which were affecting the trade of Yorkshire would not be suffered to continue for another year, as would be the case if this Bill was lost. Therefore, he trusted the House would pass the Second Reading.

*Mr. ADKINS (Lancashire, Middleton) said he wished to address the House from a slightly different point of view. He had been asked by the County Councils Association to represent their view on the question. It was not necessary for him, from the point of view taken by the body representing the county councils of England, to break any lance with the hon. Member opposite, who imported so much vivacity into his speech, nor was it necessary for him to say anything in depreciation of the traffic on the Ouse, nor in regard to the desire of the most important interests on the Humber to have adequate representation. There were, however, in this Bill two or three matters which very much impressed the County Councils Association. There was to be brought within the scope of the Bill twenty-five miles of the river Trent, and there was not in the Bill as it stood any representation whatever in respect of that waterway or of the local authorities on its borders or of the neighbouring country. Whilst the remainder of the waterway within the scope of the Bill had its representatives on the board, consisting not only of the traders and other important interests but also of local authorities, it appeared to him that it would not be at all unreasonable that there should be some representation of some of the local authorities in connection with this twenty-five miles of the Trent. The County Councils Association were exceedingly anxious that where a river either passed through the area of a county, or intersected the areas of two counties, the governing body of those counties should be represented on the board which had control over the waterway. One might imagine from some of the remarks made in the debate that the county councils of Lindsey and Nottingham were seeking to dominate the Humber Conservancy Board, but nothing could be more inaccurate or misleading. They only asked for representation. They were not there to explain or apologise for or even to minimise the sins and defects of those who had gone before them. It might be quite true that this important waterway had been derelict, but it flowed between two large areas, and surely it was important in the interests of those areas that they should have some representative on the governing body. That would facilitate and make more harmonious the action of the Conservancy Board, instead of being a hindrance to it. He would give the House just one illustration. Most properly, one of the powers given to the Conservancy Board was that of dredging, and it was provided that that power was not to be exercised to the full without a Board of Trade inquiry. He would ask hon. Members who were familiar with the details of local government whether the carrying out of such work as dredging would not be made easier if there were representatives of the local authorities from the districts through which the river flowed, sitting on the Conservancy Board to discuss the best method of carrying out such dredging at the earliest stage. Would it not be better that they should have a direct voice in this way from the begining, instead of having to appear before a public inquiry in an attitude of apparent hostility? Therefore, on behalf of the County Councils Association, he asked the House to consider with favour and sympathy the position of those gentlemen who, in local government, formed the body to which Parliament had given general administrative powers over counties, the body which was representative in character, and which was best fitted to voice the needs and requirements of the people who lived along the banks of the river and who might be affected by the work of the board. That authority should have some representation on the board. He asked the House in the next place to say, if that general principle was sound, that this Bill should provide for that representation. The Bill dealt with a long stretch of waterway between the two counties—a stretch of waterway now brought into the scope of this conservancy for the first time, which alone had no representation, and which ought to have some representation. When the hon. Baronet opposite said that this was a matter solely for the Committee upstairs, he answered himself by the skilful and careful phrases in which he described the evidence which was given upstairs—evidence which seemed to the hon. Baronet to be affected, he would not say tainted, by the point of view of the eminent men who gave it. If that was so, it was surely desirable that there should be a preliminary discussion in that House, and a statement of the views of those who might not be eminent, but who were not under the influence and the bias to which the hon. Baronet pointedly alluded. He hoped it would not be said that he and his friends were wasting the time of Parliament when they took this opportunity of making a firm and respectful protest in favour of some voice being given to a representative authority which could have no interest except the welfare of that district of the country which was committed to its charge by Parliament.

*THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. KEARLEY, Devonport) said it was unnecessary for him to go into the history of this Bill in any great detail, but he was bound to point out to the House that it originated through the intervention of the Board of Trade in 1905, when the Humber Conservancy Board, as it then was, came to the House for certain powers. The Board of Trade was well aware for many years that there were numerous bodies exercising jurisdiction over the Humber, and that their jurisdiction or responsibility overlapped in many particulars. They were also aware that the particular piece of river which had given rise to the debate that night was under no conservancy at all; that it was, as the hon. Member for Hull had explained, derelict; and that it was in a very dangerous—he might even use a stronger word, and say, disgraceful—condition. What was the obligation which the Board of Trade imposed on the Humber Conservancy when they came to Parliament in 1905? It imposed on them the obligation to have an inquiry, and the Board of Trade undertook to appoint a Commission. The Board of Trade did appoint a Commission, the head of which was Sir Kenelm Digby, who was formerly Permanent Under-Secretary of State at the Home Office, and it included an engineer of great distinction, Sir Colin Scott Moncrieff, and a member of the Bar, Mr. Sheldon, who was selected because he had considerable experience in questions of this description. The second obligation imposed on the Humber Commissioners was that, whatever the recommendations of the Commission should be, they were to be embodied in a Bill to be presented to Parliament, and that was where they stood that night in regard to the Bill. He repeated once more that the Board of Trade brought about this situation, and it was not fair to suggest that the Humber Conservancy had tried to take an advantage over anybody else. They had undertaken an obligation to do what was proposed by the Bill under discussion that night. He had hoped that none of his hon. friends would raise the question whether the Trent should be included or not, there being such an overwhelming case for inclusion. He did not think that they strengthened their case for representation, or that their case would have been weakened in any way, if they had left out altogether the question whether the Trent should be included. Nobody could deny that the Trent could not continue to be derelict. That was not open to argument at all. There were twenty-five miles of most important waterway between the Humber and the upper reaches of the Trent with no conservancy authority at all. It was twenty-two years since a Board of Trade inspector reported that this particular part of the Trent had gone from bad to worse. That was the condition of affairs in 1886. It was clear that the Board of Trade was well advised in taking steps to have this state of matters inquired into. Now he came to what was the real matter before the House. It was purely a question of representation. He was perfectly certain that the hon. Member for Gainsborough had really no interest that this part of the river should not be taken over. He wanted representation for the county council of Lindsey, and other hon. Members wanted representation for the county of Nottingham and the borough of Nottingham. His hon. friend the Member for Hull wanted increased representation for Hull, although he was glad to say the hon. Member had put his case in a very moderate way. He thought the importance of the other interests so great that he preferred to leave the question of representation over until the Bill went upstairs before a Committee. He would content himself with dealing purely with the question of representation. To take the county council claim: they said that the reference did not cover the Trent, but when the inquiry was held it was after it had been extensively advertised in the Nottingham, Lincolnshire, and Yorkshire papers. He denied altogether that this part of the Trent was outside the reference. The Commission was empowered to inquire as to what modification or extension, if any, of the jurisdiction exercised by the Humber Commissioners should be given. It was an extension of the jurisdiction that was proposed in the Bill. The jurisdiction was extended to Gainsborough Bridge. The county council said they had no idea that the Trent was in contemplation of being inquired into. They did not attend the inquiry and they said that no Trent interest was represented at the inquiry. It was quite true they were not represented. That was a dereliction of duty on their part for which the Commission was not responsible, because the advertisements went sufficiently far and wide to give them every opportunity of attending. But certain Trent interests did attend the inquiry. For example Nottingham, who had nothing but Trent interests, attended the inquiry and were represented by counsel and claimed direct representation on the body. The Amalgamated Guild of Rivermen, representing tugsmen, lightermen, and watermen of the Trent, attended the inquiry and were strong supporters of having this part of the river included in the jurisdiction of the Humber Conservancy. Mr. Rayner, the engineer to the Trent Navigation from Gainsborough Bridge to Nottingham, attended and gave evidence, and he raised no objection to the inclusion of this particular piece of waterway. So that it could not be successfully contended by the county councils that Trent interests were not represented on the inquiry. The next point was this: that if dredging took place in the Trent it would result in damage to the banks. His reply was this. In the first place the Trent was sufficiently wide to enable dredging to be carried out in a deep-water channel at a sufficient distance from the banks to occasion no damage. But what was far more important was that no dredging could take place in the Trent without the assent of the Board of Trade, who were the owners of the soil of the bed of the river, and consequently no body, even though it had jurisdiction over the waterway, was entitled to touch the bed of the soil without the consent of the Board of Trade. It was most important that no dredging of the Trent could take place without the assent of the Board of Trade. Supposing extensive draining were required to be carried out, and local landowners considered it might be dangerous to their land, they would make representations to the Board of Trade, who would not give consent until a public inquiry had been held. Therefore, in that particular connection, the county councils had nothing to fear. The next point that had been made was that all Conservancy Boards had county-council representatives. Well, he was surprised to hear that. Those who supported that argument had drawn an analogy between their own case and that of the River Thames; but as a matter of fact there was no real analogy between the two cases at all. The Humber Conservancy was solely concerned with navigation, whereas the Thames Conservancy was concerned not only with navigation but with sanitation. The watershed of the Thames extended over four thousand miles, and from it 65 to 70 per cent. of the water-supply of London was drawn. There was nothing like this in the case of the Trent, which was a tidal river pure and simple. With regard to the representation of Nottingham they stated their case and it was negatived. It was not the only borough council represented at the inquiry. There were the borough councils of York, Bradford, and Leeds. Their cases were heard, but a decision was come to against them. In face of this they had retired from the contest, and did not come again time after time, like Nottingham. If the door were once opened to Nottingham all these other towns would have a distinct grievance. It was perfectly impossible to reopen the case as regarded Nottingham. The county councils must see that it would be impossible for him to attempt to recast this Commission on the floor of the House of Commons. It was appointed by the Board of Trade, and that gave him no option but to support the findings of the Commission. When the question went upstairs there would be full licence for the Committee there to do what it chose, and the Board of Trade would use no influence in any way to prejudge the matter. The county councils would go there, and if they convinced the Committee so much the better for those councils. As far as the Board of Trade was concerned that Department would remain perfectly neutral and allow the county councils to do the best they could for themselves. The Board of Trade would have three nominations to dispose of, but it would endeavour not to give them on the side of the big battalions. He hoped the Amendment would not be pressed further; every opportunity would be given upstairs to consider all complaints, but for himself it was impossible to take any other course than that which he had laid before them that evening.

*MR. ELLIS said the Secretary to the Board of Trade when he sat down was, if he might say so, better than when he began. He finished by saying that the Board of Trade on this vital question of representation were perfectly neutral. That was a very proper attitude for a Government Department to take, but he listened with some regret to certain observations in which the case seemed almost to be prejudged. The Secretary to the Board of Trade had used arguments which if put before the Committee might have very serious results. The question, although in one sense a local one, was a very important and vital question of principle. As one of the members for Nottinghamshire which was so much concerned in the matter, he contended that it was unprecedented to give to a body like the Humber Conservancy large powers over a district, without giving the inhabitants of that district any representation whatever on the Board. That was the point at issue. Much had been said of the Board of Trade Commission, and of the obligation on the Conservancy to bring forward this Bill. He agreed that it was essential that something should be done, and he was entirely in favour of the Second Reading of the Bill, but he was justified in making the protest he had done, and he hoped it would reach the Committee. They, however, reserved their rights on the Third Reading. They were simply making a protest in favour of some representation for the districts they represented. The clause in the Bill went even beyond this suggestion, not recommendation, of the Commission referred to. When he looked at the report of the Commission, he was bound to say it had acted in a somewhat peculiar manner. It made no recommendations on the navigation of the Trent, but only certain suggestions, and said—

> "We consider it doubtful whether we have in strictness any power formally to recommend the adoption of these suggestions."

They knew they were on uncertain ground and for two reasons. In the first place the Trent was not within the terms of reference, and secondly, the evidence as to that river was not fully gone into. The Borough of Nottingham was certainly represented there, but only because they had certain old rights. They did not put forward their whole case, but left it entirely in the hands of the county council, so that the Trent was not really before the Commission, no evidence was given, and the suggestions made were in the nature of *obiter dicta* and *ultra vires*. However, the clauses in the Bill went even further than the suggestions of the Commission. He did not oppose the Bill, but he asked most distinctly and most strongly that there should be a full inquiry before the Committee, and that if the Committee passed the Bill, including the Trent, they should give full representation on the Humber Conservancy Board to the County Councils of Nottingham and Lindsey.

MR. CHARLES WILSON (Hull, W.) said he wished to associate himself with the statement that the Humber Conservancy only brought forward this Bill for the benefit of the river as a whole, and not for the benefit of any particular section of the river. It had been stated that the case for Nottingham had not been properly heard by the Commission; but the Trent Navigation Company, and many other companies in his own town who had the voting power, acknowledged that it would be in their own interest, as well as in that of the city of Nottingham that justice should be done to the Trent river. He was as much interested in the Trent as any hon. Gentleman who had spoken, and he only wished to do the best he could for the Trent. As a member of the Humber Conservancy Commissioners, he was one of a special committee that had to do with the raising of wrecks in the Humber, and they had a number of appeals asking them to remove wrecks in the Humber and Trent, and if they had had power to do so in the Trent they would have been only too glad to have done it. They proposed to put no expense upon Nottingham or Gainsborough in doing that. The cost would be raised by dues.

MAJOR RENTON said that after the explanation given by the hon. Member and the statement on behalf of the Board of Trade he asked leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

SIR GEORGE DOUGHTY (Great Grimsby), as the Parliamentary representative for many years on the Humber Conservancy, supported what the Parliamentary Secretary of the Board of Trade had said, and thanked Major Renton for withdrawing his Amendment. The Conservancy had no interests but the public interests, and he was perfectly certain that the findings of the Commissioners, embodied in this Act of Parliament, would be not only in the interests of the locality, but of the public generally. He hoped the matter would be dealt with by the Parliamentary Committee upstairs. He was in favour of representation of local interests, but he was bound to say that at present those who represented the Trent in the lower reaches had done nothing to improve the navigation, and had often placed them in a very difficult position, because wrecks in the Trent had been most dangerous to the Humber. They wanted some jurisdiction in the lower reaches of the Trent, so that that river might be made useful and effective in the public interest generally.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed.

FINANCE BILL.

Postponed proceeding, resumed.

Mr. CALDWELL in the Chair.

MR. FELL (Great Yarmouth) moved an Amendment to secure that the normal increase in the proceeds of the duties on local taxation licences should belong to and be paid into the local taxation account. He said he regretted very much that the Amendment preceding his had been ruled out of order, because it was of more importance than this proposal, but still this Amendment was of great importance to the local bodies affected. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had explained why this considerable change was to be made. With a great deal of what he had said they had on more than one occasion expressed concurrence, but in agreeing to this change they had done so on the understanding that the local authorities should not be in any worse position than they were in at the present time. The amount which was payable was a fixed amount, and what was proposed by this Amendment was that the normal increase in those sums which would take place in process of time should belong to those local bodies, and that they themselves should receive the amount which they would receive at the present time.

MR. RUNCIMAN thought the hon. Gentleman was under a misapprehension. There was no suggestion in the clause that the amount should be a fixed amount. The normal increase of the duties would be secured to the local authorities.

MR. FELL replied that the precise interpretation of the clause was a matter of dispute, and this Amendment at any rate would make the point clear.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said the words of the Bill at a later stage made the matter quite clear.

MR. FELL said that if his words would make the meaning more clear he took it that there would be no objection to their going in. All he said was that in certain places population might increase, and the locality should, he thought, receive the normal increase from these licences. The proposal of the Chancellor was that he might increase this duty, but would the increase of the duty belong to the Exchequer or to the neighbourhood? Where populations were growing institutions were coming up and rates were increasing. Was it not right that the local authorities should be recouped the heavy expenses which they would have to pay through the growth of the locality? If that was intended, it was perfectly clear that it gave them all they wished, but he did not think it was perfectly clear. He thought it would be made clearer by the addition of the words he proposed.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 6, line 13, at the end, to insert the words, 'but the normal increase in the proceeds of such duties shall belong to and be paid into the Local Taxation Account.'"—(*Mr. Fell.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said that as he under stood it the object which the hon. Member had in view had been specifically provided for by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The right hon. Gentleman had provided for the normal growth of these funds, and the local body would be in no sense damaged by the passing of this Bill. The full amount of the increased duty would come to the Local Taxation Account and would go to the credit of these bodies. That was what he thought the hon. Gentleman desired, and that was provided for by words which were to be found later on in the Bill. He thought the words were perfectly clear, and if that was so it was not necessary to add additional words. Therefore, the Government could not accept the Amendment.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that in referring to these provisions the Chancellor of the Exchequer had spoken of their simplifying the accounts. He did not see how that result would follow, as the equivalent amount could only be arrived at by keeping all the accounts as if the present system continued.

SIR F. BANBURY moved to report progress on account of the absence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who, he said, had been away since a quarter-past eight o'clock.

*THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN declined to accept the Motion. He had grave doubts originally as to whether the Amendment was in order, as the Bill provided in accordance with the Amendment; but he thought he would allow the hon. Member to move it and the answer to be given. A complete answer had been given, and he saw no reason, therefore, for accepting the Motion to report progress.

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and negatived.

Question proposed, "That the clause, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

SIR F. BANBURY thought that they should have the presence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the Question, and therefore he moved to report progress.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Chairman do report progress; and ask leave to sit again."—(*Sir F. Banbury.*)

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 73; Noes, 253. (Division List No. 263.)

AYES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Ashley, W. W.
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour,RtHn.A.J.(CityLond.)
Banbury,Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Baring,Capt.Hn.G(Winchester
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry,N.
Beach,Hn.MichaelHughHicks
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, Sir William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. H. M.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Cave, George
Cavendish,Rt.Hon.VictorC.W.
Cecil,LordR.(Marylebone, E.)
Chamberlain,RtHn.J.A.(Worc
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, A. Cameron(Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down,North)
Craig,CaptainJames(Down,E.)
Craik, Sir Henry
Dalrymple, Viscount
Douglas, Rt.Hon. A. Akers-
Duncan,Robert(Lanark,Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Faber, Capt.W.V. (Hants, W.)
Fell, Arthur
Fletcher, J. S.
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gordon, J.
Haddock, George R.
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Helmsley, Viscount
Hervey,F.W.F.(BuryS.Edmd's
Hill,SirClement(Shrewsbury)
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney,Rt.Hon.Col.W.
King,SirHenrySeymour(Hull)
Lee,ArthurH. (Hants, Fareham
Lockwood,Rt.Hn.Lt.-Col.A.R
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Marks, H. H. (Kent)
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Moore, William
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Nicholson, Wm. G.(Petersfield)
Nield, Herbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Rawlinson,JohnFrederickPeel
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts,S.(Sheffield,Ecclesall)
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool
Sheffield,SirBerkeleyGeorgeD.
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Starkey, John R.
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Turnour, Viscount
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Wilson,A.Stanley(York,E.R.)
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Forster.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Agnew, George William
Alden, Percy
Allen,A.Acland(Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Baker,JosephA.(Finsbury,E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring,Godfrey(Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow,SirJohnE.(Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry,RedmondJ.(Tyrone,N.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beck, A. Cecil
Bell, Richard
Belloc,HilaireJosephPeter R.
Benn,SirJ.Williams(Devonp'rt
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell,SirJ.H.(EssexRomf'rd
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Sir Alfred
Black, Arthur W.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Brunner,J.F.L.(Lancs.,Leigh)
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton,Rt.Hn.Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cameron, Robert
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Cawley, Sir Frederick

Mr. Austen Chamberlain.

Chance, Frederick William
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambet
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras, W
Corbett, C. H. (Sussex, E Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crosfield, A. H.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, David (Montgomery o. Co
Davies, Ellis William (Eifion)
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dewar, Sir J. A. (Inverness-sh.)
Dickinson, W. H. (St. Pancras, N
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Duckworth, James
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. Martin (Walsall
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Sir Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Erskine, David C.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Evans, Samuel T.
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Findlay, Alexander
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Rt Hn. Sir W. Brampton
Hall, Frederick
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harvey, W. E. (Derbyshire, N.E.
Harwood, George
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Harleton, Richard
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemmerde, Edward George
Henderson, J. M. (Aberdeen, W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Hobart, Sir Robert
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Hope, W. Bateman (Somerset, N.
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jackson, R. S.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, Sir D. Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich)
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lynch, H. B.
Maclean, Donald
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alport
Montgomery, H. G.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Myer, Horatio
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholson, Charles N. (Doncast'r
Norman, Sir Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pearson, Sir W. D. (Colchester)
Philipps, J. Wynford (Pembroke)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Pollard, Dr.
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, E.)
Priestley, Arthur (Grantham)
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rendall, Athelstan
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th
Richardson, A.
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Sir G. Scott (Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, Sir C. E. (Manchester)
Scott, A. H. (Ashton-under-Lyne
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Snowden, P.
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thomasson, Franklin
Thompson, J. W. H. (Somerset, E
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Wadsworth, J.
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walters, John Tudor
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wardle, George J.
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Waterlow, D S.
Watt, Henry A.
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williamson, A.
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, Hon. C. H. W. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton
Winfrey, R.
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Whitely and Mr. J. A. Pease.

Question proposed, "That the clause, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he would repeat a question with regard to which he had spoken at an earlier stage of the debate, he thought on the occasion of the Budget statement, as to the simplification of accounts. He gathered from the statements which had been made that it would be necessary to keep all the accounts and make all the calculations, and the question he desired to put—he would not elaborate it—was where the simplification of accounts and calculations came in.

MR. ASQUITH said the provisional state of things existed. They would merely keep up the provisional accounts until the question of the grants-in-aid of local taxation was dealt with by the House; but so far as the national finances were concerned, there would be only one account presented, and the Legislature would be free in future to devote the licence duties to purely Imperial purposes.

MR. HARMOOD-BANNER (Liverpool, Everton) said he hardly wished to oppose this clause as it contained matters with which he agreed. In regard to these grants in aid of local taxation, he had hoped to hear some assurance that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would press the matter forward, as local interests were being injuriously affected. The right hon. Gentleman was taking back these licence duties into his own hands, but, as was so well pointed out by the Local Government Committee of the London County Council in their Report which appeared in *The Times* that morning—

> "The increase which is contemplated in the rates of some of the licence duties will probably tend to restrict the natural growth of the proceeds of the duties calculated at their present rates, and consequently to decrease the amounts allocated to local taxation."

That was very well put as regarded his position. He thought there could be no question whatever that the position taken up in this Finance Bill would reduce the amount receivable by the municipalities and the county associations, and that the right hon. Gentleman was taking back these licence duties with a view to increasing them and so swelling the Exchequer accounts. There were, he thought, some thirty-seven of these licence duties—refreshment licences, dog licences, and all sorts of licences—which would now come into the hands of the right hon. Gentleman for the purpose of being increased and brought into the national finances. He could not put the case better and shorter than by taking the dog tax, which was 7s. 6d. It was perfectly clear that if the Chancellor of the Exchequer increased that tax to £1—he did not suggest that the right hon. Gentleman was going to do it—there would be far fewer dog licences taken out, and the result would be that the local municipalities would receive so many fewer 7s. 6d.'s. The national Exchequer would receive so many more 12s. 6d.'s than it now received, and it would do so at the expense of the municipalities. That was the way in which the right hon. Gentleman carried out his statement that—

> "The increase which is contemplated in the rates of some of the licence duties will probably tend to restrict the natural growth of the proceeds of the duties calculated at their present rates, and consequently to decrease the amounts allocated to local taxation."

It was perfectly clear that the local authorities were going to suffer in this matter. So far as the local bodies themselves were concerned, he had received a resolution passed by the Association of Municipal Corporations, in which they declared that the effect of the proposal would be to decrease the amount which they would receive. The London County Council and the municipalities contended that not only should the Government not take this tax into their own hands, but they ought to increase the amount receivable from the local taxation fund. A certain amount which was now payable by the Government was being taken off and placed upon the municipalities. When the local taxation grants were first made the expense of maintaining the police fell half upon the Government and half upon the municipality, but when the grants-in-aid were given the municipalities were left to bear the whole of the cost. In the Report of the London County Council it was stated that the expenses which had fallen on the council, in respect to what they had taken over, as compared with the average of the years ending 1892–93, created a deficiency of £204,000. So also with other county councils and municipalities, the duties were in excess of the grants, and they were left with large deficiencies. They asked that the clause should not be passed without a grant-in-aid to meet these deficiencies; but he, not going so far as that, asked that county councils and municipalities should not be made worse off than they were at present. If a licence which now cost £25 was increased to £100 the tendency would be towards fewer licences. The municipality would get the £25 and the Government £75. By adding to the tax in that way they would be decreasing the number. He thought he was fully justified in complaining that this clause had been put forward without any alteration to meet that position. In May last the Chancellor of the Exchequer said the change would not impose a penny additional on any of them, but as a matter of fact it did. In the same reply the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "Perhaps the hon. Member had better wait and see the Bill before asserting the converse."

He had waited, and he found the Bill quite in accordance with his evil prognostications, and it did not meet the views either of the municipalities or of the county councils. The right hon. Gentleman further said—

> "He had given that undertaking in his Budget speech, and if that did not turn out to be the case the Bill would be amended. If the hon. Member found in the Bill any such clause the clause would be amended to make it clear."

What was the right hon. Gentleman's attitude to-day? When they brought forward an Amendment to carry out this promise they were jockeyed out of a discussion. Knowing the generosity and consideration of the right hon. Gentleman, he appealed to him to consider what he said previously when this matter was brought forward. The local authorities had suffered as he had described, and not only was that not to be remedied, but the deficiencies would be increased. They were going to have thirty-six licences taken away from them. In increasing the duties on those licences for national purposes, the right hon. Gentleman was decreasing them for municipal purposes.

MR. ASQUITH indicated dissent.

MR. HARMOOD-BANNER said the right hon. Gentleman shook his head. They all knew that if they increased the price of an article they decreased the consumption. The same thing applied to licences. If they increased the price of licences they would decrease the number, and the municipalities would suffer. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that this was only a preliminary step and that he did not wish to deal with the whole question until twelve months hence. He had shown that the right hon. Gentleman was going at present to commit a rank injustice on municipalities and county councils. The right hon. Gentleman might well pause for a year in order to take the whole matter into consideration with a view to bringing forward a proposal in a generous spirit. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that he had taken motor licences into his own hand for the purpose of increasing them, motors being luxuries which should pay more towards the national finance. He agreed with the right hon. Gentleman in that, but he thought the municipalities and county councils had a right to say that the money obtained from the increased licences should be applied to the creation of a fund out of which they might pay for the improvement of roads. The right hon. Gentleman was taking the motor licences into his own hand not for the purpose of improving roads and remedying the inconvenience which motors caused to the public, but for the purpose of making them luxury taxes to aid the general position of the Exchequer. He hoped hon. Members would consider what was being done in this matter. He did not think this was a proper way to deal with counties and municipalities.

MR. McKENNA said that the clause as it stood would not affect the finance of the local authorities by one sixpence. Whatever they would get under existing taxation they would continue to get, so far as this Bill was concerned. What the hon. Gentleman meant was that once this clause was passed it would facilitate other Bills which might deprive the local authorities of some of the revenue they now received. The time for meeting that would be when such a Bill was introduced. The hon. Gentleman was perfectly right in raising the point at once, but not a single argument he had used was relevant to this Bill. Treating his warning with the utmost respect and taking it fully to heart, he begged him to allow this clause to pass and to rely on the opportunities he would have hereafter to deal with changes when they arose.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said his hon. friend's case was that, if the amount of these individual licences was increased, and it was the expressed intention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that they should be, their number would be decreased, and that, while the Treasury would benefit, the local authorities would lose. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said it was not his intention that they should lose, but at the same time he had put forward as his sole reason for this clause that he should be free to raise these duties in the future. At an earlier stage when he discussed the Resolution on which this clause was founded, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said that if there was any danger of the local authorities suffering they could amend the clause in Committee; and on that assurance his hon. friend the Member for Liverpool withdrew his opposition and the Resolution was agreed to unanimously. Unfortunately it was found that they on that side of the House and the Chancellor of the Exchequer were alike in the error, and that to carry out the right hon. Gentleman's pledge effectively was now impossible under the rules of the House. The only course now open to them was to reject the clause as a whole, and to defer taking any steps in this direction until they were authorised by Resolution to amend the clause in the sense which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had approved. They could not consent to a further postponement, as the President of the Board of Education suggested, having already lost one opportunity by postponing their action on the Resolution stage. They did not want to be caught in another trap, and they thought it better to act at once. In regard to a number of these licences a considerable rise in the duty would cause a sensible reduction in the number of licences, and thus expose the local authorities to loss.

MR. ASQUITH said he was sure that the right hon. Gentleman and the Committee generally would believe he was not likely to depart from any pledge which he had given, and he did not in the least desire to do so on this occasion. He had said all along that if there was any ambiguity on the subject, it would be possible to meet it by an Amendment to the clause when it came up for discussion in Committee. It appeared now that under the rules of order they were not able to take any steps in that direction. At the same time, he hoped the Committee would not take the drastic step, and, as he thought, the unreasonable course, of rejecting the clause. What was the situation? Unless there was a change in the law, the local authorities would receive under this clause exactly what they would have received in the past. The purport of the Amendment which the hon. Member for Liverpool would have moved if it had been in order, was to anticipate the possible effect of a change in the law raising the scale of licensing duties, and thereby diminishing the receipts of the local authorities. He had it in contemplation in the future to propose, if he were able, legislation which might have the effect of raising those duties. But unless and until that legislation was proposed and passed, it was conceded that the local authorities would not suffer under this clause. Supposing such legislation was proposed, he was prepared to have accepted, or to have proposed himself, an Amendment to the clause to the effect that, while the local authorities should be entitled, as they would be entitled under the clause, to the whole of the normal increase in those duties if the scale of duties remained unchanged, under no circumstances, whatever change by way of rise or adjustment in the duties was ultimately assented to by Parliament, should they receive a lower sum than they had received during the average of the last three years, including the present year, under the existing system. He was prepared, on behalf of the Government, to give that undertaking now. If they proposed, as he agreed they contemplated proposing, to Parliament an increase of those duties which might have the effect of diminishing the receipts of the local authorities, he would undertake that that should be accompanied by a provision which would secure to the local authorities that they should not receive less than they had received on the average of the last three years. He thought it was a very fair offer, which ought to be accepted.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said that there were two points in the right hon. Gentleman's speech to which he would like to call attention. He based his speech on two premises. The scheme was that the local authorities were not only to be guaranteed the amount per licence that they now received, but also some proportion of the increased rate on each licence.

MR. ASQUITH: No. I guard the local authority from any loss due to a diminished number of licences in consequence of a rise in the rate of licence. But, of course, I do not give them a share in the additional proceeds of the licences due to a rise in the rate.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said that if there were no change in the scale, normally the number of licences would increase with the population, and the Exchequer and the local authorities would share in the increased return. But if the scale were changed, then the local authorities were to be deprived of the normal increase, and were to receive a fixed, unalterable amount. The right hon. Gentleman's Bill did not carry out his own intention, and the rules of debate forbade him now to carry out that plan by amending the clause. That ruling startled him. The Resolution which preceded the introduction of a money Bill did prevent the House from increasing the charge on the community; but such Resolutions would be wholly mischievous if they limited the discretion of the Committee of the House on matters which did not in any way increase the amount of the charge on the community. So impressed was he with the general view of this question that he asked as a point of order whether it had been ruled that the Committee had so bound itself in the preliminary committee on the introduction of the Bill as to prevent the Chancellor of the Exchequer from introduing an amendment which added no charge, which did not violate the spirit of the Constitution in any way, but which prevented the House from exercising a free hand.

MR. ASQUITH said that he was as anxious as the Opposition to have this question decided now, if possible, by the insertion of words in the Bill rather than by a Ministerial undertaking, though one was as binding as the other. In order formally to raise the question he proposed the Amendment standing in the name of the hon. Member for Oswestry, which was to this effect—

> "Provided that in no case shall the sum payable to any local taxation account be less than that actually paid 'on the average of three years to end on March 31, 1907.'"

That addition would exactly carry out the undertaking he had given to the House.

*THE CHAIRMAN was afraid that that Amendment would not be in order, as an Amendment later in the clause had been decided, and he had put the question that the clause as amended stand part of the Bill. On the substance of the matter he ruled that the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman would be no more in order than the original Amendment of the hon. Member for Oswestry. He was extremely sorry that this should be the position of affairs, but he had to carry out the rules of order. It was clear that if the proceeds of the public-house licences were less in 1907–8 than they were on the average of the three years preceding there would be, if the Amendment were inserted, a deficiency to be made good, and not allowed for in the Resolution. He must, therefore, adhere to the ruling he had previously given. The simple way of dealing with this matter would be to pass a different financial resolution.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the Chairman's ruling, he could consent to some modification of the original Resolution provided it were understood that the new Resolution should be passed practically *sub silentio.*

MR. ASQUITH entirely agreed with the right hon. Gentleman. They were all the victims of a common error. The modified Resolution, he added, might be brought in first thing to-morrow.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 17:—

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN moved to report Progress.

MR. ASQUITH asked the Committee to pass the first subsection, continuing the income-tax at the rate of 1s.—[Cries of "No"]—he undertaking to report Progress when the question of differentiation was reached.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Chairman do report Progress; and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*)

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 85; Noes, 241. (Division List No. 264.)

AYES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Ashley, W. W.
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour,RtHn.A.J.(City Lond.)
Banbury,SirFrederick George
Baring,Capt.Hn.G.(Winchester
Barnes, G. N.
Barrie,H.T.(Londonderry,N.)
Beach,Hn.MichaelHughHicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brotherton,Edward Allen
Bull, Sir William James
Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. H. M.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Cave, George
Cavendish,Rt.Hn.Victor C.W.
Cecil,LordR.(Marylebone, E.)
Chamberlain,Rt.Hn.JA.(Worc.
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Coates,E.Feetham(Lewisham)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig,CharlesCurtis(Antrim,S.
Craig, Captain James(Down,E.
Craik, Sir Henry
Dalrymple, Viscount
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A.Akers-
Duncan,Robert(Lanark,Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Faber, Capt. W. V.(Hants,W.)
Fell, Arthur
Fletcher, J. S.
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gordon, J.
Gretton, John
Haddock, George R.
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Helmsley, Viscount
Hervey,F.W.F.(BuryS.Edm'ds
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney,Rt. Hon.Col.W.
King,SirHenrySeymour(Hull)
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Lee,ArthurH.(Hants, Fareham
Lockwood,Rt.Hn.Lt.-Col.A.R.
Long,Rt.Hn.Walter(Dublin,S.
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Marks, H. H. (Kent)
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Meysey-Thompson, E. C.
Moore, William
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Nicholson, Wm. G.(Petersfield)
Nield, Herbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Rawlinson,JohnFrederickPeel
Remnant,JamesFarquharson
Roberts,S.(Sheffield,Ecclesall)
Rutherford,John(Lancashire)
Rutherford,W.W.(Liverpool)
Sheffield,Sir Berkeley George D.
Starkey, John R.
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thomson,W.Mitchell-(Lanark
Turnour, Viscount
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset,W.)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson,A.Stanley(York,E.R.)
Wilson,W.T.(Westhoughton)
Wortley,Rt.Hon.C.B.Stuart-
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Forster.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Agnew, George William
Alden, Percy
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith,Rt.Hn.HerbertHenry
Astbury, John Meir
Baker,JosephA.(Finsbury,E.)

Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring,Godfrey(Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Sir John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry,RedmondJ.(Tyrone,N.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beck, A. Cecil
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn,SirJ.Williams(Devonp'rt
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Brunner,J.F.L.(Lancs.,Leigh
Bryce, J. Annan
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton,Rt.Hn.SydneyCharles
Byles, William Pollard
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton,Rt.Hn.RichardKnight
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Cheetham, John Frederick
Clough, William
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins,SirWm.J.(S.Pancras,W.
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett,C.H.(Sussex,E.Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crosfield, A. H.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies,David(MontgomeryCo.
Davies,Ellis William (Eifion)
Davies, Timothy(Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol,S.)
Dewar, SirJ.A. (Inverness-sh.)
Dickinson,W.H.(St.Pancras,N.
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne,MajorE.Martin(Walsall
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards,Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Sir Frank (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Erskine, David C.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Evans, Samuel T.
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Findlay, Alexander
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.HerbertJohn
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood,G.(Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon,RtHn.SirWBrampton
Hall, Frederick
Harmsworth, Cecil B.(Worc'r)
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey,A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harvey,W.E.(Derbyshire,N.E.
Harwood, George
Haslam, Lewis(Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemmerde,Edward George
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert,Col.SirIvor(Mon.,S.)
Hobart, Sir Robert
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope,W.Bateman(Somerset,N.
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, Lief (Appleby)
Jones,William(Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Lamb,EdmundG.(Leominster
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex,Harwich
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George,Rt.Hon.David
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Maclean, Donald
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna,Rt.Hon.Reginald
M'Laren,H.D.(Stafford,W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield,H.Rendall(Lincoln)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks,G.Croydon(Launceston
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montgomery, H. G.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan,J.Lloyd(Carmarthen)
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Myer, Horatio
Newnes, F. (Notts,Bassetlaw)
Nicholson,CharlesN.(Doncast'r
Norman, Sir Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearce,William(Limehouse)
Pearson, Sir W. D. (Colchester)
Pearson,W.H.M.(Suffolk,Eye)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Pollard, Dr.
Price,RobertJohn(Norfolk,E.)
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rendall, Athelstan
Renton, Major Leslie
Richards,Thomas(W.Monm'th
Richardson, A.
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts,Charles H.(Lincoln)
Roberts,John H.(Denbighs.)
Robertson,SirGScott(Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann,SirCE.(Manchester)
Scott,A.H.(Ashton under Lyne
Seaverns, J. H.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shaw,Charles Edw.(Stafford)
Shipman,Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt.Hon. John
Smeaton,Donald Mackenzie
Snowden, P.
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley,Hn.A.Lyulph(Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor,TheodoreC.(Radcliffe)
Thomas,SirA.(Glamorgan,E.)
Thomas,DavidAlfred(Merthyr
Thomasson, Franklin
Thompson,J.W.H.(Somerset,E.
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Wadsworth, J.
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walters, John Tudor
Ward,W.Dudley(Southampton
Waring, Walter
Warner,Thomas Courtenay T.
Waterlow, D. S.

Watt, Henry A.
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Willamson, A.
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Winfrey, R.
Wood, T. M'Kinnon

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

THE CHAIRMAN ruled out of order an Amendment standing in the name of the hon. Member for North Paddington, proposing a scale of graduation and differentiation of income-tax, ranging from 1d. in the £ on earned, and 2d. in the £ on unearned incomes of £160, to 1s. 6d. in the £ on incomes (earned or unearned) of £10,000.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR thought it would be convenient if some arrangement could be arrived at whereby they could have to-morrow and Monday for the finishing of the Committee stage on the Finance Bill, on the common understanding that there should be only one day given for the Report stage with no particular limitation as to the hour at which the discussion should be closed. If that met the views of both sides of the House, he begged to suggest it.

MR. ASQUITH said he thought that would be a very reasonable arrangement, and he was prepared to accept it, subject to this. His right hon. friend the Chief Secretary had to be in Ireland on Tuesday, and he would, therefore, suggest that the Evicted Tenants Bill should be taken on Monday, and that Tuesday should be the second day for Committee on the Finance Bill.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Oh, yes.

MR. ASQUITH: I understand that there will be to-morrow and Tuesday for the remainder of the Committee stage, and that there shall be another day, not necessarily limited to the Eleven o'clock Rule, for Report.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said he did not know what amount of discussion was expected on the Evicted Tenants Bill, and he must not be regarded as pledging himself on that Bill at all. If the discussion on it lasted more than a day, the Government would have to arrange for it. But at all events only two days more would be taken for Committee on the Finance Bill, and only one day, not necessarily finishing at 11 o'clock, for the Report stage. The actual days on which that bargain was to be carried out would rest with the Government alone. They could settle what the days were to be. The bargain was about time, and not about particular days.

MR. ASQUITH: I entirely assent to that, and I move to report Progress.

MR. W. REDMOND: I understand that the Evicted Tenants Bill will be taken on Monday.

MR. ASQUITH: Yes.

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

———

IMPORTED WATCH-CASES BILL.

As amended (by the Standing Committee), considered; read the third time, and passed.

Adjourned at twenty-seven minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Wednesday, 3rd July, 1907.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

North Staffordshire Railway Bill.—Moved, That the order made on the 20th day of March last, "That no Private Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after the 18th day of June next," be dispensed with, and that the Bill be now read 2ª; agreed to: Bill read 2ª accordingly, and committed: The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Dundee Corporation Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.].—Read 3ª (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]; Tramways Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.].—House in Committee (according to order): The Amendments proposed by the Committee made: Standing Committee negatived: The Report of Amendments to be received To-morrow.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill.—House in Committee (according to order): Bill reported without Amendment: Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª To-morrow.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 13) Bill.—Read 1ª; to be printed, and referred to the Examiners. (No. 92.)

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EAST AFRICA PROTECTORATE.

Correspondence relating to the flogging of natives by certain Europeans at Nairobi.

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3846, Spain (Bilbao); No. 3847, Germany (Frankfort).

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

SEA FISHERIES REGULATION ACT, 1888.

Order made by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries under the provisions of the above Act, for the variation of an order for the creation of the Eastern Sea Fisheries District, together with Report by inspector on inquiry.

SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904 (COUNTY OF SOMERSET).

Order made by the council of the county of Somerset, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the hours of closing for certain classes of shops within the parish of Tiverton.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

PROHIBITION OF MEDICAL PRACTICE BY COMPANIES BILL. [H.L.]

Bill read 3ª according to order.

***The LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL (The Earl of Crewe)**: My Lords, I have one or two small Amendments to this Bill. The House may remember that the last time the measure was before your Lordships the noble Lord in charge of the Bill, Lord Hylton, had put down an Amendment to Clause 1, and I suggested then that if he would confer with the Department we might be able to frame some form of words which would be agreeable both to him and to us. The noble Lord was kind enough to carry out that suggestion, and I understand that he agrees to the Amendments which we propose. The point which arose was whether, in the case of a company contravening the provisions of the Bill, all the directors, officers, and others should be made personally liable, and it was suggested that in some cases that provision might operate rather hardly. Consequently, we have proposed that while the company itself should be liable, which, of course, is one of the principal objects of the Bill, the directors and officers of the company should only be liable if they knowingly and wilfully authorised or permitted such contravention. That seems to meet the case of anybody who for some reason or other is really not personally concerned and so ought not to be personally liable. I

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

beg, therefore, to move the first Amendment standing in my name.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 1, page 1, line 8, to leave out from the second word 'company' to the word 'shall' in line 10."—(*The Earl of Crewe.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 1, page 1, line 12, after the word 'happens' to insert the words 'and every director, manager, or other officer of the company who knowingly and wilfully authorises or permits such contravention shall incur the like penalty.'"—(*The Earl of Crewe.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: There is also a small Amendment to Clause 2 of a drafting character. It is the opinion of the Department that the form of words which we propose to insert carries out the design more fully and completely than do the words in the Bill as it stands. I beg, therefore, to move that this Amendment be agreed to.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 2, page 2, line 5, to leave out from the word "means" to the end of the clause, and to insert the words 'any body corporate wherever established which carries on business in the United Kingdom.'"—(*The Earl of Crewe.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

IMPORTED WATCH-CASES BILL.

Read 1ª, and to be printed. (No. 91.)

SUGAR BEET GROWING IN ENGLAND.

*THE EARL OF DENBIGH: My Lords, I rise to call attention to the fact that when the policy of His Majesty's Government with regard to the Brussels Convention was announced, provisional contracts had been signed for growing 2,000 acres of sugar beet in the neighbourhood of Sleaford, that financial arrangements were in process of completion for the erection of a local factory to employ 120 men in the winter months, and that it has now been found necessary to abandon the whole project owing to the uncertainty created by the action of the Government.

I do not feel that I need apologise for again bringing this subject before your notice at so early a date, because I know that any practical proposal for the purpose of improving the agriculture of this country meets with great attention from your Lordships. I wish I could say the same with regard to the attitude of His Majesty's present Government towards this particular question. It seems to me that they have got so tied up with the various pledges they gave previous to the general election with regard to the Sugar Convention that it is very difficult to get them to consider anything on this question if it in any way tells against them.

I would remind your Lordships, with regard to the Sugar Convention, that it was passed after a great deal of controversy for the purpose of stopping the sugar bounties and suppressing the foreign cartels; and it is very often forgotten that those cartels did just as much harm as the direct bounties themselves. The Convention was very roundly abused by the Party now in power, mainly, I believe, because it was passed by the late Government; and the then Opposition, on the hunt for battle cries, thought the Convention would serve them on many political platforms in this country, and they made it so by laying to the door of the Convention all the blame for the rise in the price of sugar which took place a year and a half after the Convention was passed. I think it is generally admitted by people who regard the matter impartially that this rise in the price of sugar was really caused by the great shortage of the European crop. But the rise afforded too great an opportunity to be lost, and the result was that many Members of His Majesty's Government and a great many of their supporters went about the country saying that it was wholly the result of the Convention.

I was very glad to see the other day an admission from the noble Lord, Lord Denman, who has dealt with this question before, to the effect that he did now admit that this rise in price was to a large extent due to the short crop. I think it a great pity that the noble Lord did not mention that fact until I rather forced it from him by recalling to his notice some facts which he could not very well controvert. The noble Lord then went on to say that he thought the rise in price was also caused indirectly by the Convention, through the fact of Russian and Argentine sugar not being allowed into this country. Previous to the Convention the amount of Russian sugar that came in was about 15,000 tons. The amount that came from the Argentine was very small indeed, and I believe the Argentine is at the present moment an importing and not an exporting country at all. Considering that the world's crop of sugar is 12,000,000 tons and that the amount consumed in this country is nearly 2,000,000 tons, I think that to contend that the coming or not coming in of 15,000 tons or so of Russian sugar was any factor in the rise in the price is a very bold statement; and if the noble Lord persists in that opinion I can only admire from a distance the hardihood and originality of his ideas.

On various political platforms throughout the country previous to the general election a great deal of what I can only call most undiluted nonsense was talked on this subject by politicians of every rank, and the people of the country were given an entirely erroneous impression of the facts of the case. The members of the Government then found themselves committed to pledges against the Convention, and they gave no thought or heed as to how their action would affect the agricultural question in this country, and the result is the situation I want to bring before your Lordships to-day. The Government seem to me to have steadily ignored every attempt we have made to call their attention to the practical side of the beet sugar industry, and do not appear to have taken any trouble whatever to make themselves acquainted with the most elementary facts connected with the practical side.

A year ago I ventured to draw the attention of the House to the question. I was answered by the noble Earl the President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, who informed me that he thought there was only about £3 per acre profit in it to the farmers, and he seemed after that to dismiss it from his mind altogether as not being worthy of consideration. Shortly after, the noble Earl received a deputation of gentlemen from the neighbourhood of Sleaford, in Lincolnshire, who informed him that a movement was on foot there to bring about the starting of the beet sugar industry. They pointed out to him the bearing upon the question which the Brussels Convention had, and asked him what hope there would be of getting some rebate in the matter of excise from His Majesty's Government with a view of starting the industry. The noble Earl turned them down very shortly indeed. He told them they could not hope for anything in the way of rebate, and he refused to discuss the question of the Convention; and these gentlemen went away with feelings of great disappointment at the reception they had received from His Majesty's Government.

Then recently in this House—in May last—I asked if the Government were now prepared to do anything to encourage the starting of this industry in this country, and, although I think it deeply affects practical agricultural questions, the noble Earl the President of the Board of Agriculture did not see fit to say a word upon the subject. He left it entirely to Lord Denman, who dealt with it partly from the Treasury point of view and partly from the political point of view, and to the noble Lord the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, who dealt with it from the Foreign Office point of view. The noble Lord Lord Fitzmaurice told us that the Foreign Office had nothing to do with sugar. Well, that is exactly what we complain of. The Foreign Office has to deal with this very important question of the Convention, but they absolutely and totally ignore the bearing which it has on British agricultural interests at home, and that is typical of the whole attitude of the Government with regard to this question. The noble Lord commented in pleasant sarcasm on the remarks which I had made. He spoke of the "sugary" nature of the suggestions I had put forward and the "mysterious benefits" which he said my proposals were going to bring to the agricultural population. All I can say is that it is extremel disappointing to have a perfectly seriou business proposition of this sort treated with contempt and indifference, and to be told by Lord Denman that we were simply impracticable enthusiasts, which I can only take as being the polite Parliamentary way of saying we are agricultural cranks and not worthy of notice. The result is that, although we have done our best to call the attention of His Majesty's Government to the great necessity of maintaining the Convention in the interests of this very important question, the agricultural side of it has been absolutely ignored.

The other day we were met with the announcement in the House of Commons that the penal clause was going to be denounced. The penal clause is the one which forbids bounty sugar or cartel sugar being brought into this country, and it is practically the only weapon which we have for compelling respect for the Convention. What is the result? At the time the announcement was made, this movement at Sleaford, to which the attention of the noble Earl the President of the Board of Agriculture had been previously drawn, had made very great progress. The landowners and farmers round Sleaford are of a go-ahead nature—I wish that landowners and farmers in all parts of the country were the same—and they convinced themselves that there was a great deal in this sugar question and they determined to try a practical experiment on a commercial scale. An eminent German expert was engaged to come over and advise them, and provisional contracts for the cultivation of no less than 2,000 acres of beet sugar in the district were drawn up with the local agriculturists, many of them small occupiers and freeholders, who undertook to grow five, ten, fifteen, or twenty acres apiece. These contracts were completed, signed, and stamped, and very favourable railway rates had also been arranged. The factory site had been chosen, the water supply carefully gone into, and a great deal of financial support promised. The factory was to cost some £50,000 or £60,000, and altogether £90,000 was going to be raised for the enterprise. And to show your Lordships that it was a serious business proposition I would mention that an eminent firm of cattle food makers were prepared to find £30,000 of the capital on condition that they had the handling of the slices for the purpose of cattle food. The factory was going to turn out 7,000 tons of sugar a year, and it would have provided employment for about 120 men in the winter months. That is the first example we have had of the agriculturists of the country really taking hold of this matter as a really serious business proposition.

I was invited the week before last to meet the promoters of this scheme. I do not know whether they would be called agricultural cranks the same as myself, but at all events they were business men who knew what they were about; and I heard read a report by their committee saying that it was useless now to go further with the matter, because they could not recommend anybody to put up a sum like £90,000 for this enterprise if, through the action of His Majesty's Government, the Convention was going to be endangered with a chance of the whole sugar trade being once more placed under the dominion of the foreign cartels. The result is that the whole scheme has been dropped and the agriculturists, not only of Lincolnshire, but also of Yorkshire, where a similar scheme was in preparation, have been very greatly disappointed.

I have no doubt that His Majesty's Government will taunt me with respect to the wisdom which they displayed in having steadfastly refused everything in the nature of a rebate of excise, seeing that these gentlemen have been willing to go on with their enterprise without anything in the nature of a rebate. The answer to that is, as I stated at the time I asked for a rebate, that it is purely a question of price. When I first asked for a rebate the price of sugar was somewhere about 8s. 6d. a cwt., which is considerably below the cost of production. The price is now nearer 10s. a cwt. Then, again, the land round Sleaford is exceptionally suited for this particular industry, and the farmers there believe, from practical experience, that they can grow some twenty tons to the acre, as against twelve tons to the acre, which is the Continental average. The consequence is that they are able to work on a better scale than would be the case on the average land throughout the country. At the same time, I wish to repeat that I believe it will be very difficult to start this industry on average land if some consideration is not given to the factories in the early part of their existence.

One of the chief arguments brought forward by Lord Denman, in his reply to my request for a rebate, was the loss of revenue that would ensue. The noble Lord was aghast at the prospect of losing a figure which he put at possibly £400,000. That was a purely arbitrary figure which I had mentioned. I said that if the sugar production of the country reached a certain total the rebate might amount to £400,000. Of course, the loss in revenue is naturally a serious question, and I can quite understand that for a Chancellor *in extremis* the prospect of losing any revenue at all is a very serious matter, particularly when that Chancellor is at his wits' ends and would not know where on earth to turn for a substitute for that revenue. But I would ask the noble Lord and the Treasury whether they have yet considered what the loss of revenue in this way would mean. The rebate which I suggested was £2 10s. a ton, the amount permitted by the Convention. At this rate £400,000 would mean a rebate on 160,000 tons of sugar. On the scale of the factory referred to in my Notice this would mean the output of twenty-three rural factories treating 1,500,000 tons of roots on a four-course system, thus improving the cultivation of some 300,000 acres of land in this country. But this loss of revenue would not occur until this was an accomplished fact and until the industry was practically established, and I respectfully submit to the House that the benefits to be gained by the establishment of this industry would be well worth paying something for, to say nothing of the fact that a considerable amount would come back in income-tax and in the general prosperity of the neighbourhood. But the mere fact of its necessitating a loss of revenue was sufficient for it to be turned down by the Government and not thought of any more.

It is interesting, however, to note what the attitude of the Government is with regard to small holdings. The other day a Small Holdings Bill was introduced into the other House which no doubt has been looked upon as likely to prove an efficient and useful snowball against your Lordships' House, and that Bill is to be assisted in its career with a grant of £100,000 in the first year, the Chancellor of the Exchequer giving that without turning a hair. Nobody can say whether that project is going to be successful. The Government themselves seem to have so much doubt upon the question that they do not even urge the purchase of land, but want to lease it, so that if it is unsuccessful the landowner and the taxpayer will have to stand the racket. You have only to consider this grant of a large sum for a purely untried scheme and put it against the other project, which would mean a loss of revenue only after an accomplished fact, and I think your Lordships will see how untenable the argument of the Government is.

I would also draw attention to the fact that this industry ought peculiarly to appeal to all who are interested in the co-operative movement. The greater number of these factories on the Continent are run upon co-operative principles by the farmers and the landowners in the neighbourhood, and if they are successful there I cannot see why they should not be successful here. I suppose we shall be told that all this alarm with regard to the dropping of the penal clause is quite unnecessary and that the Government do not intend to do anything in the nature of reviving bounties. If the Government do not wish to see bounties revived why do they not have the courage of their convictions and leave the Convention alone? I have heard members of the Government say: "We do not approve of bounties ourselves, but if other people are foolish enough to give bounties why should not we profit by them?" This lofty principle is akin to that of the gentleman who said he strongly objected to burglaries on principle, but if other people were foolish enough to commit them he did not see why he should not profit by being the receiver of stolen goods, thereby getting them cheaper.

The real difficulty we have to contend with in this question is the fact that the general public seems to know very little about the intricacies of it. It is an intricate question, but on the Continent, where the sugar industry is a very important branch of agricultural and of commercial business, people take a much keener interest in and have a far greater knowledge of it than here. The result is that His Majesty's Government seem to be taking advantage of the ignorance which is displayed by the general public in this country to use this question of the Convention purely for political purposes. I sincerely hope that the public will now begin to realise that this question is not one which concerns merely the West Indies, but is applicable to the greater part of the Empire, and I trust that this concrete example from Sleaford of the effect of the action of His Majesty's Government will bring home to the agriculturists of the country that the Convention concerns them to a far greater extent than they have ever thought before.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord FITZMAURICE): My Lords, I am sure that no Member of your Lordship's House will complain for a single instant of the noble Earl having again called attention to this question. I think we shall all agree that this is a most important question, but it would be well if noble Lords were to recognise that what separates us are really questions of principle and of belief. In any case I certainly can say for noble Lords on this side of the House that we fully recognise the complete sincerity of the noble Earl himself. The whole question of bounties and cartels is one upon which the majority of reasonable men may agree to differ, and upon which there probably always will be differences of opinion. All we ask is that the noble Earl should recognise that in regard to us. I regret, however, if I may say so without offence, that in his speeches and letters on this subject the noble Earl is too much given to introducing allusions about persons being animated by the desire to capture votes on political platforms, and to take advantage of a question like this Convention when a general election is coming on. Personally, I make no charge of that kind, for I recognise that at election times there is always a disposition shown by both Parties to indulge in a certain amount of good-humoured exaggeration. At the same time it will be readily acknowledged that, notwithstanding this, the traditions of public life are high and honourable on the whole.

When the noble Earl's notice first appeared on the Paper, we were in some doubt as to which Department was particularly aimed at. But in the end we came to the conclusion that we were all included, and the speech of the noble Earl has certainly justified that belief, for he indulged in a good deal of random firing at all the Government offices. First of all he had a shot at my noble friend the President of the Board of Agriculture, then at the Board of Trade and the Treasury, and finally he delivered an attack upon the office which I have the honour to represent. In the course of that portion of his speech he complained of the Foreign Office because he alleged that we did not in the least care for the interests of agriculture. My Lords, I venture to meet that statement with a positive contradiction. It is true that I did say the other day that the Foreign Office had no direct responsiblity for agriculture. That is, I am afraid, almost a platitude. But it is wholly wrong to say that it either does not care for or underrates the importance of agriculture. The Foreign Office is called upon constantly to negotiate with foreign countries as to a great number of questions, the real care and decision of which rests more with other Departments of the Government than with the Foreign Office. I venture to assert that during the short time we have been in office we have actively shown what we are disposed to do for the agricultural interest. That is, perhaps, a matter which would be more properly developed by my noble friend the President of the Board of Agriculture, who, no doubt, if this debate continues, will be prepared to address your Lordships in regard to that part of the question.

The present position of the Sugar Convention is fairly well known, because a few days ago a White Paper was laid before Parliament, in which the Secretary of State explained a little more fully than in replies to Questions in the House of Commons what the present attitude of the Government is. As there still appears to be some doubt in the minds of noble Lords, and especially in the mind of the noble Earl who brought forward this question, I would ask your Lordships' permission to read two short extracts from the despatch of Sir Edward Grey to Sir A. Hardinge, His Majesty's Minister at Brussels. The Secretary of State wrote—

> "His Majesty's Government have come to the definite conclusion that the limitation of the sources from which sugar may enter the United Kingdom, whether by prohibition or by the imposition of countervailing duties, is inconsistent with their declared policy, and incompatible with the interests of British consumers and sugar-using manufacturers, and that consequently it will be impossible for them to continue to give effect to the provisions of the Convention requiring them to penalise sugars declared by the Permanent Commission to be bounty-fed."

The Secretary of State then proceeded—

> "It is, however, possible that, in the special circumstances of the case, the other Contracting States might judge it to be preferable to accord to the United Kingdom, by a Supplementary Protocol, a special exemption from the obligation to enforce the penal provisions of the Convention. They might be the more disposed to take this course, inasmuch as such an exemption would be unlikely, at all events for a considerable period, to have any material effect of a prejudicial character upon the export trade in sugar from any of the Contracting States."

As that despatch is dated June 1st last it must be quite evident that negotiations upon the particular points mentioned in the second paragraph are continuing at this moment, and until those communications are completed it is impossible for me to make a statement outside the four corners of this despatch. But there is one thing which I would desire at once to point out to the noble Earl—namely, that he is quite mistaken in supposing that, if the policy adumbrated in the second paragraph I have read were carried out, it would immediately, by the abolition of the penal clauses, introduce the mischiefs of cartel sugar in this country. The abolition of the penal clauses by themselves, no doubt, would have the effect of making it easier than it now is for the sugars of non-Convention countries—such as Russia—to come into this country. But that is a different matter from the far larger question of the introduction of cartel sugars, which formerly were introduced here from countries like Germany now within the Convention. These are questions, however, that could be discussed with greater advantage at a later period of the session, when we may be able to make a fuller statement than is now possible as to the exact position in which this country will stand when we have received replies to the suggestions adumbrated by the Secretary of State.

But as to the broad lines of the policy of the Government I wish to see no misunderstanding. We are not ashamed to acknowledge that we are above all things a free trade Government. We quite admit that many noble Lords opposite do not share those views. We respect their views, and we hope that the same toleration will be extended to our sincerity and consistency of conviction. The Government are convinced that, whatever small advantages might possibly accrue locally by the development of such industries as those for which the noble Lord has pleaded, they would be infinitesimal compared with the loss of those advantages which the absolute freedom of entry of sugar into this country would bring about. The noble Lord told us about 120 men who would have been employed if this factory had come into existence. I remember very well the late Mr. George Palmer, of Reading, telling me about the time the late Baron H. de Worms was engaged in negotiating a sugar convention that if that convention had been ratified the result would have been that he would have been compelled immediately to close a new branch of his works which he had just built in order to develop the making of cakes into which a great quantity of sugar entered; and several hundred men would probably have lost their employment. I put that case, of which I happened to hear by accident, against the noble Lord's.

*THE EARL OF DENBIGH: My point was that the factories I had in view, being in the rural districts and villages, would be a means of bringing people back to the land, which is a quite different proposition from the case of factories in towns.

*LORD FITZMAURICE: I quit sympathise with that view. I have represented in Parliament a constituency which was largely rural, and I have always felt that anything which would bring about the establishment of factories in our villages would be a very desirable thing; but there is another side to the question. Looking at employment in the country as a whole, I believe the abolition of the system produced by the Convention and the free introduction of sugar into this country would bring about more employment than the plan proposed by the noble Lord.

I do not think the noble Earl was quite accurate in regard to the quotation he made of the statement by my noble friend Lord Denman in regard to the rise in the price of sugar. The noble Earl stated that my noble friend had said that the rise in the price of sugar shortly after the Convention was mainly due to the shortage of the crop on the Continent. What my noble friend did say was that it was "in the first instance" so due. That is an important distinction. My noble friend Lord Denman was anxious to be accurate, and I do not think the statement he made in any way went beyond the facts.

I do not desire in the least to overstate the case in regard to price. The manner in which these artificial arrangements, contrary to the spirit of free trade, work out is altogether unforeseen, and their consequences, and the reasons for them, never admit of exact proof, because in great trade movements the questions of price and value are not the result of one thing only. They depend upon a great number of different circumstances operating at different times, and sometimes operating together. It may fairly be argued that the great rise in the price of sugar which took place very soon after the Convention was very largely due to the shortage of a portion of the crop. But that was not the only reason. It is quite acknowledged by those who have studied this question that the fact that we prohibit Russian, Argentine, and Danish sugar from entering the United Kingdom does not lessen the available supply of sugar in the world, and that sugar which would otherwise have been sent to this country finds its way elsewhere, and thus displaces sugar which, instead of being sent to those destinations, is sent to the United Kingdom. For example, Russian sugar finds its way to Persia, and in consequence a certain amount of Austrian sugar is sent to the United Kingdom instead of to the East. The blank which has been made by the diversion of Russian sugar has very likely been filled up in our markets by a larger importation of French sugar. Although it may be quite truly said that since sugar from Convention countries has taken the place in our markets of sugar from the excluded and non-Convention countries there has been no actual diminution of supply, it may nevertheless be fairly argued that the Convention has brought about a bad result.

If it were asked how, in view of the fact mentioned, the prohibition of Russian sugar in this country could affect the price we had to pay for our sugar or could really limit our supply, the answer would be that any interference with the natural flow of commodities along the routes which they follow when left to themselves must involve friction and must tend to make them more expensive. A case may easily arise, when sugar prices are unduly inflated by speculation, when it may be desirable for an importer to procure sugar from a special source which may for the moment be the most favourable one, for it is just at such periods of speculation that prices are not, as they are at more stable periods, uniform throughout the world. The penal clause, in shutting out certain sources, even though they are sources of minor importance, may in this case inflict a real injury on purchasers. Such interference with the natural course of trade, and such interference with the right of a purchaser to obtain goods in any market which may accidentally be especially favourable to him, will cease, so far as purchasers in this country are concerned, with the abandonment of the penal clause. It will give the intending purchaser the knowledge that all markets are open, and that fact tends to produce an equalising effect on the market.

These are the main arguments which have induced the Government to believe that the Sugar Convention is, on the whole, a document which has not had any good effect upon British trade. At the same time, the Secretary of State has recognised that, as this country has set its hand and seal to a document which has brought about great changes in other countries, we must approach those results from the point of view to a certain extent of the effects of our conduct upon foreign countries. That is the main reason why the Secretary of State has attempted to find out whether, without inflicting grievous disturbance upon foreign countries in regard to some of those arrangements which we have ourselves practically encouraged them to enter upon, we cannot relieve our own consumers of sugar by abolishing the penal clauses from the worst consequences of this, as we think, unhappy Convention.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My Lords, this is, perhaps, hardly the occasion for a prolonged debate upon the important question which has been brought before the House to-night. I feel that the more because I gather from my noble friend who has just sat down that negotiations are still in progress, and that before the end of the session we may have a fuller opportunity of considering the position which His Majesty's Government intend to assume.

But I wish, in the first place, to say that I think that those who believe in the possibility of introducing the cultivation of sugar-beet into these islands—and I am under the impression that the number of those people is increasing—owe a great debt of gratitude to my noble friend for the courage and perseverance which he has shown in bringing this question before the House. I think my noble friend has been well advised in making it clear that the issue he desired to bring forward was not the same that he had raised on previous occasions. On former occasions he pressed His Majesty's Government to encourage the cultivation of sugar-beet by the grant of a rebate. I say, frankly, that I was not very much surprised when I learned from noble Lords opposite that that was a suggestion which they did not see their way to adopt. My noble friend made, however, rather a shrewd point when he suggested to the House that a Government which had shown the splendid audacity displayed in the Land Bills now before Parliament need not have been too timorous when it came to his much more modest proposal. But I do not desire to press that point this evening.

What my noble friend tells us to-night is that the announcement recently made by His Majesty's Government in regard to what I can only call their withdrawal from the Brussels Convention has had the effect of strangling at its very birth a well thought out movement for the introduction of what might have proved a very important branch of industry in the rural districts of these islands. What is the attitude, then, of His Majesty's Government towards the Convention? I gather from the despatch of the Secretary of State which has been referred to that they do not desire formally to dissociate themselves from the other Powers who have signed the Convention. What they do desire is to intimate to all concerned that they refuse any longer to enforce the clause under which those Powers bound themselves to put certain penalties on bounty-fed sugar. I have a pretty distinct recollection of the negotiations which led to the Brussels Convention, and my recollection is certainly to the effect that the penal clause was the essential element in the whole matter. There had been, as some of your Lordships may be aware, attempts in former years to bring about an international arrangement of this character. Those attempts had always broken down. Why? Because it was always found impossible to obtain the consent of this country to a penal clause. The penal clause, as I have said, was that without which I believe the Brussels Convention could not have been obtained. I understand that so far as that clause is concerned His Majesty's Government have fully made up their minds to extricate themselves from their obligations at the earliest possible opportunity.

It does not seem to me to be enough to say, as we are saying, that we have no intention of giving bounties ourselves to British sugar products. That is not the point. The point is whether we desire to close our markets to sugar produced under this artificial and, as I shall always believe, most mischievous system. If our markets are, as I suppose they will be, re-opened a few months hence to bounty-fed sugar, it will be difficult to convince me that that will not mean the pulling out of what I would describe as the keystone of the arch of the Brussels Convention. What are the reasons given in the despatch of the Secretary of State? We are told that this penal clause is inconsistent with the declared policy of the Government and incompatible with the interests of British consumers and sugar-using manufacturers. What is the declared policy of His Majesty's Government? It was announced this evening in vigorous terms by my noble friend. He said—

> "We are a free trade Government."

Well, my Lords, I say there never was a clearer violation of free trade, there never was a more frontal attack on the principles of free trade, than this arrangement of sugar bounties and sugar trusts operating under the shelter of those bounties.

My noble friend suggested that His Majesty's Government were opposed to what he spoke of as interference with the natural movement of commodities. Could any movement of commodities be more unnatural than the movement of sugar which results from these trusts? As to the interests of the consumers and manufacturers of sugar, I have always been under the impression that what best suited them was that the price should be moderate and steady. It was because the system of bounties led to prices which were neither moderate nor steady that I for one was in favour of a determined attempt to put an end their existence.

Then as to the interests of the consumer. Is it the case that the Convention had the effect of raising prices against consumers? What it did was to raise the price from the low level at which it once stood, owing to the manner in which the market was flooded with bounty-fed sugar—a level which I think once reached the figure of 5s. 9d. a hundredweight—to a figure corresponding much more closely to the actual cost of producing sugar. Under the system of bounties fluctuations of price took place of the most extraordinary description. In 1889 the price fluctuated between 11s. and 28s. a hundredweight, and in the ten years between 1893 and 1903 it ranged between 6s. and 19s. Now I do not believe fluctuations of that kind are really compatible with steady, honest business, and I should like in that connection to quote a well-known sentence of Mr. Gladstone's upon this subject. Mr. Gladstone once said—

> "I do not think any gain founded on inequality or injustice can bring good to the consumer."

That was our point of view when this Convention was negotiated. I think we may fairly claim for the Convention that it has had the effect of widening and increasing the sources of supply, and that, to my mind, is a matter of extreme importance. No one can say that since the Convention there has been any sign of a shrinkage of the supply of the world. I shall be corrected if I am wrong, but I believe the sugar crop of the world was larger in 1906 than any previously recorded sugar crop, and the figure for consumption the year before was larger than in any previous year.

And surely in connection with this question we have a right to take some thought of the interests of our own sugar-producing Colonies. To my mind it is extremely satisfactory that, whereas the imports of sugar produced from other materials than beet were falling steadily between 1890 and 1903, they have shown in the last three years a very considerable rise. Therefore, my Lords, I hope we may claim for the Convention that it has widened the sources of supply, and that it has had, at any rate, some effect in bringing about a revival of the sugar industry in our own Colonies. Of this I am quite sure, that the announcement of His Majesty's Government of their withdrawal from the penal clause has created the profoundest dismay in those Colonies.

We have heard a great deal about the apprehension with which the manufacturers of sugar products in this country regard the cessation of the occasional supply of cheap bounty-fed sugar. So far as I have been able to ascertain, no real injury whatever has been done to those who are connected with those industries. What has frightened them is that some of them were under the impression — a wholly mistaken impression—that because sugar under the bounty system at one time was sold in this country at 5s. 9d. a cwt., they had a right to look forward to 5s. 9d. sugar in the future as something upon which they could regularly depend. Nothing could be more unlikely than that, under the bounty system, those low prices would continue to prevail. We know how the bounty system works. You have the low prices, you have competition knocked out, and, when a gigantic and carefully organised monopoly has been established, then up go the prices again in the manner in which they used to in former days. As far as the confectioners are concerned—and I wish to speak with the greatest respect of that industry—so far is it the case that they have not been ruined by the Brussels Convention that I see from the published returns that the exports of jam and other kinds of confectionery stand higher for the year 1905 than for the two previous years.

I have only to say before sitting down that what makes me especially regret the decision at which his Majesty's Government have arrived is this, that it seems to me that our action leaves us open to the imputation that in regard to this important question we are deserting the Powers with whom we acted at the time that the Convention was concluded. It is to me painful to think of the kind of observations which are likely to be made by those Powers upon our conduct in withdrawing from the penal clause. If the Convention breaks down, the responsibility will certainly be laid—and I think rightly laid—at our door. As for the minor matter to which my noble friend behind me has referred, I regret that the particular enterprise in which he takes so much interest should have suffered as it has suffered by the announcement of His Majesty's Government. But the real question is one of infinitely greater magnitude, and in regard to the larger aspects of the case I must say that I greatly regret the decision which His Majesty's Government have intimated.

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (The Marquess of RIPON): My Lords, I do not think my noble friend is in the least justified in speaking of our withdrawal from that portion of the Convention from which we propose to withdraw as a case of deserting those countries with whom the Convention has been made, because, as my noble friend knows very well, the Convention contemplated that at a certain date, which is about to arrive, any of the Powers connected with the Convention should have a right to withdraw. That is, of course, a fair announcement to all the Powers concerned that if any one of those countries should at that time not find it to their advantage to continue in the Convention they have a perfect right to give notice of withdrawal. I cannot think that that deserves to be called a desertion of those with whom the Convention was made.

My noble friend declared that the system of bounties is quite contrary to free trade, and I entirely agree with him. The system of bounties is most objectionable all round, but the system of bounties exists in foreign countries. We are not responsible for them. We think it a bad system, and I think that the evidence that was before the world at the time that the Convention was made showed that it was a bad system for those countries which gave the bounties. But it is not in the least inconsistent with the doctrines of free trade that we should carry out this policy on our side, although it may not be carried out by other countries. My noble friend began by saying that, as he understood that the matter referred to in the last paragraph of the despatch of the Secretary of State was still under consideration and negotiation, he would not enter further for the moment into that question. But he has gone pretty fully into the general considerations of the Convention itself, but I must decline, under the present circumstances, to follow my noble friend in that part of the matter, particularly after the admirable statement which has been made regarding it by my noble friend behind me.

With regard to the question of my noble friend opposite, what he has said is a very excellent illustration of one of the most objectionable features of a protectionist system. You cannot have protection in any shape or form without it being quite certain that industries that are founded and grow up under that system will stand in the way of any change; and the longer the protection exists, the greater the number of industrial undertakings that are protected by it, the stronger will be the argument that you ought to continue protection. The evil of taking a first step in that direction is that you are immediately exposed to that argument. If the experiment in which the noble Lord opposite is interested goes on under anything in the nature of a protective arrangement, other undertakings of the same kind will spring up. It is no advantage to a new industry that it should be called into existence by methods of that kind. If it can establish itself in the country that will be a good thing, but if it rests upon artificial arrangements fostering it under circumstances which are not natural to it you are not benefiting at all the people whom you are artificially supporting, but creating a great difficulty in the way of the removal of the protection in the time to come.

As to the particular case with which we have been dealing to-night, I know that my noble friend opposite, who always takes such a charitable view of the opinions of his political opponents, thinks and believes that the objection which we have always made from the beginning to the Brussels Convention was made for a political purpose. My Lords, it was made in accordance with the principles on which we have always acted, the principles which we have always defended; and if any persons have created an industry under the belief that we made those statements for temporary political or electioneering purposes, and have then founded upon that belief the investment of their money in undertakings of this kind, they have made a very great error.

House adjourned at Six o'clock till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 3rd July, 1907.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Heywood and Middleton Water Board Bill [Lords].—As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Land Drainage Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill; Land Drainage Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill.—Lords' Amendments considered, and agreed to.

Lights on Vehicles Bill.—Consideration, as amended (by the Standing Committee), upon Monday next.

Sheffield Corporation Bill [Lords].—Reported from the Police and Sanitary Committee, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Leeds (South Parade Chapel) Charity Bill.—Reported, without Amendment, from Standing Committee A.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 234.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 234.]

Bill to be taken into consideration To-morrow.

Kingswood (Whitfield Tabernacle, Schoolroom, etc.) Charity Bill.—Reported without Amendment, from Standing Committee A.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 235.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 235.]

Bill to be taken into consideration To-morrow.

Longton (Caroline Street Chapel) Charity Bill.—Reported, without Amendment, from Standing Committee A.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 236.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 236.]

Bill to be taken into consideration To-morrow.

Board of Education Scheme (Hulme Trust Estates Educational) Confirmation Bill.—Reported, without Amendment, from Standing Committee A.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 237.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 237.]

Bill to be taken into consideration To-morrow.

Tees Valley Water (Consolidation) Bill [Lords].—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP J).

Major SEELY reported from the Committee on Group J of Private Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Friday, at half-past Eleven of the Clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill.—Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill, as amended, to be considered To-morrow.

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Beath, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

VACCINATION ACTS.

Petition from Margate, for repeal; to lie upon the Table.

WEEKLY REST-DAY BILL.

Petition from Harringay and other places, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

SEA FISHERIES REGULATION ACT, 1888.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, under the provisions of the said Act, for the variation of an Order for creating the Eastern Sea Fisheries District, together with Report by Inspector on Inquiry [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 233.]

EAST AFRICA PROTECTORATE.

Copy presented, of Correspondence relating to the Flogging of Natives by certain Europeans at Nairobi [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Council of the County of Somerset, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the Hours of Closing for certain classes of Shops within the parish of Twerton [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3846 and 3847 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Payment by County Authorities for Supervising Slaughter of Animals.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, College): To ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state what sums the following county local authorities paid in 1906, or 1905 if the later date is not available, for inspecting and supervising the slaughter of animals within their jurisdiction; whether, and in what cases, these sums were paid to veterinary surgeons or to medical practitioners; and what number of carcases, if any, were condemned in these various counties as unfit for human food, viz., Renfrew, Dumbarton, Stirling, Ayr, Linlithgow, Lanark, and Peebles.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) It is impossible to state for any of the counties named the sums paid in any year for inspecting and supervising the slaughter of animals. Such inspection and supervision as a rule forms part of the duties of the officers of the public health department, more especially the sanitary inspectors. Such officers are paid inclusive salaries, and it is impossible to state exactly the amount paid in respect of the above-mentioned duty. As regards the last part of the hon. Member's Question, thirty-five carcases were wholly condemned and internal organs and parts of 367 other carcases were condemned during 1906; of these carcases one was condemned in Dumbartonshire, one in Stirlingshire, and the remainder in the upper and middle wards of Lanarkshire. None were condemned in Renfrew, Linlithgow, Ayr, or Peebles. I may explain that in the counties other than the upper and middle wards of Lanarkshire a considerable portion of the meat consumed is supplied from the public slaughter-houses situated within burghs. For example, I am informed that in the lower ward of Lanarkshire almost the whole of the meat is obtained from Glasgow.

Scots Greys—Stables at Tidworth.

CAPTAIN FABER (Hampshire, Andover): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the stables for the Scots Greys at Tidworth have yet been commenced; if not, will he say why; and whether he can now name a definite date for their commencement.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Building operations have not yet been commenced, but the work in preparing plans, specifications, and quantities is sufficiently advanced to render it possible to call for tenders in a few days time. Until the tenders are received a date cannot be fixed for the commencement of the work.

Woolwich Discharges—Consideration of Men's Dependents.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether in considering any future discharges of men in the Ordnance Factory at Woolwich he will have special regard to the number of women and children dependent upon the men it is proposed to discharge.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) As I have already informed the hon. Member on the 26th ultimo, in reply to a somewhat similar Question, every regard is paid, when selecting men for discharge, to all the circumstances of each man's case, including any points concerning his family he may put forward.

Army Expenditure—Coast Protection.

MR. COWAN (Surrey, Guildford): To ask the Secretary of State for War when he proposes to issue the Return, ordered by the House on 12th March, giving, under different headings of Army Expenditure, the relative amounts devoted to the Expeditionary Force and immobile defences, such as coast protection.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) This Return, which involves an immense amount of clerical labour, is in course of preparation. I regret that I cannot at present name a date for its issue.

War Office Purchase of Land at Kilcreggan.

MR. WATT: To ask the Secretary of State for War at what date the purchase was effected of the land at Kilcreggan, bought for £14,500; and what is the amount of money since expended on works.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) As I informed my hon. friend on the 29th ultimo, the purchase was concluded in October, 1901; the amount of money expended on the construction of Portkill battery since that date is approximately £19,560.

Portadown Post Office Staff.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General with regard to the revision of the indoor staff of the Portadown post office, the proposals for which were submitted in February, 1906, and sanctioned in December last, by which provision was made for a chief clerkship and two additional overseers, whether the changes, as provided for under that revision, have yet been given effect to; and, if not, to what cause is the delay to be attributed, and with whom does it rest; is he aware that an overseer is and has been, since the revision was authorised, performing the duties of chief clerk, as also two telegraphists discharging the duties of overseers without the remuneration incident to these respective positions; and whether he will take steps to have this matter terminated, as also to assure that those affected shall receive the emoluments attached to the positions that they now occupy from the date on which the revision was ratified.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The promotions in question were settled at the end of April last, but their announcement was delayed for inquiry into certain suggestions of religious bias communicated to me by the hon. Member for West Belfast. I have now satisfied myself that the recommendations placed before me were influenced by no improper motive; and the promotions will be announced forthwith, taking effect from the 29th April last. I regret that I am unable to carry out the promotion from the date of the revision, as suggested.

Postman's Route at Mandabawn, County Cavan.

MR. SAMUEL YOUNG (Cavan, E.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he received a memorial from the inhabitants of Mandabawn, near Cootehill, county Cavan, asking a reversal of postman's route; and, if so, can there be a favourable answer given.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I have not received such a memorial recently, but about a year ago a memorial was forwarded by nine persons, who stated that they would not object to a reversal of the post in question. It was, however, known that other persons on the post would object, and until a fully representative expression of opinion from the persons affected is forthcoming I should not be justified in carrying out the alteration desired.

Pay of Board of Trade Tapeholders.

MR. SUMMERBELL (Sunderland): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he is aware that the tapeholders in the service of the Board of Trade only receive a maximum salary of £72 10s. per annum; that their work requires considerable skill and a general knowledge of the laws relating to tonnage; that they are exposed to risk in taking the necessary measurements, and, in case of injury, no compensation is paid; that when out of port they are only allowed 2s. for a day of ten hours and 6s. for a day and night of twenty-four hours; and, seeing that these men some time ago petitioned the Board of Trade in regard to the above-mentioned conditions of labour, will he state whether any action is contemplated having for its object an improvement in their working conditions.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The weekly wage of Board of Trade tapeholders rises to 28s. (£72 16s. per annum), and uniform is provided. Tapeholders perform their duties under the direction of a surveyor, and are not required to have a knowledge of the laws relating to tonnage. In the few instances where tapeholders have been injured whilst discharging their duties they have been granted full pay during their absence, and their medical expenses have been paid by the Department. The petition referred to has been before the Treasury, who, however, have not, so far, been able to sanction any alteration in the terms of employment of tapeholders.

Erection of Lights at Dowros Bay, County Donegal.

MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Congested Districts Board agreed some years ago to provide leading lights for the guidance of vessels at Dowros Bay, county Donegal, but that, though lamps were actually procured for the purpose some three years ago, they have not yet been erected; whether the Irish Lights Board have raised objections to their erection; and whether, in view of the dangerous nature of the two channels giving access to the harbour, he will urge upon the authorities concerned the urgent necessity of proceeding at once with the erection of the lights.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) In 1904 the Congested Districts Board decided to erect leading lights for the western channel of Dowros Bay, which is the channel used by the large majority of the boats which come from other ports to the fishing in that locality. The lights were purchased and were about to be put up when the local fishermen objected to the western channel being lighted, as they wished the lights put up for the eastern channel, which is the one most used by them. The latter channel, being narrow and intricate, is not a safe one for strangers, and the Board never proposed to light it. In consequence of the attitude of the local fishermen the Board decided not to proceed with the erection of the lights for the western channel, but to confine their work to putting up a red light on Rosbeg Pier. The Irish Lights Board sanctioned the erection of the proposed lights.

Obstruction by Standing Vehicles at Athlone.

MR. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a resolution passed by the urban council of Athlone protesting against prosecutions at the instance of the local police against persons for allowing their horses and carts to remain outside the doors of business premises, particularly on market and fair days; and whether in this matter he will instruct the police to have regard to the wishes of the local representative body.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The town clerk of Athlone has recently written asking that the owners of carts standing outside business premises in the town should not be interfered with by the police. The same official, however, had written a short time previously calling attention to the fact that a certain street was habitually obstructed by carts, and asking that the police should take steps in the matter. It is the duty of the police to secure that the thoroughfare is not obstructed, and the Inspector-General informs me that in this case the police have performed the duty with moderation. It has always been the desire of the police to facilitate the public and the traders in every legitimate way, but they cannot permit constant obstruction by carts left in the street without persons in charge of them.

Irish Evicted Tenants—Case of William Burke, of Ballinagould.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say what action the Estates Commissioners have taken in the case of William Burke, of Ballinagould, evicted tenant, on the estate of Reverend J. T. Waller, of Castletown, Pallaskenry, in the county of Limerick; and whether their inspector has interviewed the landlord with the view to reinstatement; and, if so, with what result.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners have investigated this case. The landlord has not consented to the applicant's reinstatement in the farm from which he was evicted. The Commissioners, however, have placed the applicant's name on the list of persons suitable to receive allotments of land if such should be acquired.

Application for Untenanted Land by Michael Dundon.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say whether the Estates Commissioners have received an application from Michael Dundon, labourer, of Hollywood, Adare, in the county of Limerick, for a portion of untenanted land on the Dickson estate acquired by them; and, if so, whether his application will receive their favourable consideration.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners have received Michael Dundon's application, and will duly consider it when distributing the untenanted land on the estate referred to.

Trading Licences in Natal.

MR. GRETTON (Rutland): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if it is proposed to publish further Papers dealing with trading licences in Natal about which representations have recently been made by the Government of that Colony.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The correspondence with the Natal Government is not yet complete, and it is not proposed to publish Papers at present.

Merchant Shipping (Tonnage) Bill and Port Authorities charging Dues on Gross Tonnage.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if the Merchant Shipping (Tonnage) Bill will interfere with those port authorities who now have power to charge dues on 50 per cent. of the gross tonnage of ships.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The Bill would not deprive a port authority of any statutory powers which they at present possess of charging dues on a percentage of the gross tonage.

Rights for Use of Bass Rock.

MR. J. D. WHITE (Dumbartonshire): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, before the feuing of a portion of the Bass Rock in 1900 by the Northern Lights Commissioners from Sir Walter Dalrymple at an annual feu duty of £40, any public authority had any rights in respect of the use of the Bass Rock for prison purposes, or in any other way; and, if so, whether, in arranging that feu duty, the value of such rights was taken into account.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) I am informed by the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses that, so far as they are aware, no public authority possesses rights in respect of the use of the Bass Rock "for prison purposes." The Commissioners state that the title in their favour is a feu charter conveying a full feudal right of property, and contains a clause binding the disponer or superior in "absolute warrandice," but, excepting from such warrandice, "the rights reserved to the Crown in the titles to the said Island of the Bass," these rights being the rights to fortify and garrison the island reserved in the Crown Charter to Sir Hugh Dalrymple in 1707. The Commissioners ascertained from the War Office in 1899 that these Crown rights would not be affected by the proposed lighthouse. They state that the value of the Crown rights were duly considered when adjusting terms for the acquisition of the ground.

Sunday Delivery of Letters at Pidgeons, near Athlone.

SIR W. R. NUGENT (Westmeath, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General if he will arrange for a Sunday delivery of letters at the Pidgeons post office, near Athlone, in county Westmeath, the cost of which would be trifling, as there is at present a Sunday delivery at Glasson, which is only three miles distant.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I have called for a Report on this subject, and on its receipt I will send the hon. Member a reply.

Increased Wages for Labourers at Kew Gardens.

MR. SUMMERBELL: To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he can state the date when the increase of wage and the shortening of hours promised to the labourers and others at the Royal Gardens, Kew, will come into operation.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) The increased wages sanctioned by the Treasury will be paid as from the 2nd May last. The arrangements to be made for the shortening of the hours of labour are being worked out in detail, and will be carried into effect with the least possible delay.

Assessment of Borough of Hampstead.

DR. AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): To ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will give the annual assessment of the metropolitan borough of Hampstead for the last three quinquennial periods; and can he say how much of this sum arises from the assessment of new property in each period and how much from the increased assessment of old or existing property.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) The information desired is given in the following Table—

Quinquennial period.	Rateable value.	Increase on previous quinquennial re-valuations.		
		New property,	Increased assessment of existing property.	Total increase.
	£	£	£	£
1895 - -	786,908	84,603	32,540	117,143
1900 - -	938,542	113,887	37,747	151,634
1905 - -	1,067,071	114,294	14,235	128,529

Agreement between Government and Messrs. Kynoch.

MR. GRETTON: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will lay upon the Table a copy of the agreement recently concluded between Messrs. Kynoch's and His Majesty's Government.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The terms, which I stated to the House on Thursday last, are as follows:—Messrs. Kynoch undertook—

(1) to withdraw their appeal to the High Court and accept the decision ot the Essex Quarter Sessions.

(2) to write a letter to the Chief Inspector of Explosives undertaking not to use mercuric chloride or any ingredient which has a masking effect on the Abel heat test, and generally to observe the terms of their licences.

(3) to indicate the explosives now under seizure in magazines which contain mercury, and to hand them over to the inspectors, to be ultimately dealt with as the committee appointed jointly by the War Office and the Home Office may recommend.

On the other hand I agreed —

(1) that the cases now pending against Messrs. Kynoch shall be withdrawn.

(2) that all explosive not containing mercury shall be released.

(3) that the magazines required by Messrs. Kynoch for trade purposes shall be cleared by concentrating the seized explosive in such place or places as may be approved by the Chief Inspector.

Settlement of Claims for Refund of Income-tax.

SIR WILLIAM BULL (Hammersmith): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether some steps will be taken to expedite the settlement of claims for refund of income-tax, in view of the fact that claims which have been under consideration for more than six months are still unsettled, no explanation being given by the Board of Inland Revenue of the delay.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) If particulars are furnished of cases in which long and unexplained delay has occurred, inquiry will be made in regard to them. Beyond this the Board of Inland Revenue can only say that every effort has been, and is being, made to deal expeditiously with claims for refund of income-tax.

SIR WILLIAM BULL: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Excehquer whether, in the case of securities standing in names other than that of the claimant where the Board of Inland Revenue require documentary evidence in support of a claim for the refund of income-tax, and when there exists no trust deed, will, or settlement, he will give instructions that the particular nature of the document which they would accept should be supplied to the claimant so that he might have the same prepared.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The nature of the document cannot be prescribed in general terms, but must depend upon the particular circumstances of each case, which, if there be any doubt or difficulty as to what is required, should be represented to the Board, who will then be ready to give any assistance in their power.

Bills dealing with India.

Mr. GRETTON: To ask the Secretary of State for India if any Bill dealing with India will be introduced during the present session.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) There is no present intention to introduce such a Bill this session, but I cannot say what may prove to be necessary.

Compensation paid in connection with Athlone Rifle Range Arbitration.

Mr. HAYDEN: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will state the names of persons to whom, in the arbitration proceedings over the acquisition of a bog for the Athlone rifle range, compensation was awarded, to whom such compensation has been paid, and the names of the persons who have not received the amount awarded; and whether he will explain the delay in these cases.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The names of the persons to whom compensation was awarded are stated below. All have been paid save Malachy Lennon, Catherine and Bernard Rafferty, Richard Lennon, Patrick Heslin, Patrick Dignan, and Luke Dignan. In the case of Bernard and Catherine Rafferty it was judicially decided in proceedings before the Master of the Rolls and subsequently the Court of Appeal, and in Malachy Lennon's case before the Master of the Rolls, that those parties were not entitled to be paid any compensation, notwithstanding the awards made in their favour, they not having legal or equitable claim to compensation. The circumstances of the cases of Richard Lennon, Patrick Heslin, and the Dignans were similar to those thus decided and are ruled by them. There has been no delay. The solicitor for the parties was informed by the chief Crown solicitor that the War Department would not pay them any compensation.

William Lloyd
David Ramsay.
William Ramsay.
Sir E. G. Burke.
Reps John Fitzgerald.
Francis Henihan.
Mary M'Whinny.
The Misses Lyster.
Michael Morgan.
Hodson Estate.
Henry Percy.
James Keenan.
John Rhatigan.
Denis Fallon.
Bernard Butler.
Thomas Shine.
John Kelly.
James Cunningham.
Bridget Claffey.
M. Kenney.
John Martin.
Bernard Daly.
Patrick Fallon.
Patrick Dillon.
Patrick Walsh.
Bernard Curley.
John Clogher.
Thomas Finneran.
Peter Kelly.
M. Dillon.
Pat Walsh.
John Gallagher.
Peter Brennan.
Bernard Shine.
Malachy Lennon.
Richard Lennon.
Patrick Heslin.
Patrick Dignan.
Luke Dignan.
Catherine and Bernard Rafferty.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Mr. FELL (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if it is the intention to deepen any of the harbours at the mouth of the Thames or on the East Coast to enable them to take in H.M.S. "Dreadnought" if occasion should require.

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee): As was stated in reply to a Question by the hon. Member on 24th June, the Sheerness bar is to be dredged. No other dredging in harbours on the East Coast is contemplated. Any harbours on the East Coast which have been habitually used by our battle fleets will admit the "Dreadnought."

Mr. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham) asked whether the bar at Sheerness was to be dredged sufficiently to allow the "Dreadnought" to pass over it at all states of the tide.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON asked for notice of that Question.

MR. FELL asked whether the "Dreadnought" would be able to get into Chatham Dockyard.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he understood it would.

Queen's Barracks, Perth.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrews Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what steps, if any, have been taken to provide reasonable accommodation in the sergeants' mess at Queen's Barracks, Perth, in view of the fact that there is scarcely standing room when the mess is used by Volunteer sergeant instructors, Militia permanent staff sergeants, and depot sergeants.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. BUCHANAN, Perthshire, E.): Sanction was given in February last for the provision of an additional room of 504 feet superficial area.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: On behalf of the hon. Member for the Hoxton Division of Shoreditch, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the official reports show the officers' quarters at Queen's Barracks, Perth, to be satisfactory; whether representations have been made as to the necessity of extensive repairs; and, if so, when were such representation made.

On behalf of the same hon. Member, I beg also to ask the Secretary of State for War whether there is a corporals' room in Queen's Barracks, Perth; and whether the corporals in Queen's Barracks, Perth, at present mess with the privates.

MR. BUCHANAN: I will answer this and the subsequent Question together. No representations have been made as to the necessity of extensive repairs to these officers' quarters at Perth. The repainting of the quarters was the only service specifically referred to the War Office for execution during the present year, and funds are available for that purpose. There is a corporals' room in connection with the canteen at Perth, but the corporals and privates mess together, as is not unusual in the service.

Maryhill Barracks.

MR. COCHRANE (Ayrshire, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he has now decided whether cavalry will be sent to Maryhill barracks after the Scots Greys have left Scotland.

MR. BUCHANAN: It is not intended to quarter a cavalry regiment at Maryhill barracks after the Royal Scots Greys have left Scotland.

Indian Factory Labour Committee.

*MR. SMEATON (Stirlingshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Indian Factory Labour Committee has yet submitted its Report; when he expects to be able to lay it upon the Table of the House; and whether legislation in this country will be necessary to give effect to any of its recommendations.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. MORLEY, Montrose Burghs): I hope to be able to present the Report within ten days. With regard to the rest of the hon. Member's Question I would refer him to the Answer given by me to a similar Question on the 27th June.†

India and the Sugar Convention.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he will place in the Library for inspection by Members the memorials received at the India Office from public bodies in India concerning the Sugar Convention.

MR. MORLEY: I will cause them to be placed in the Library as desired.

Political Officers' Equipment in Somaliland.

*CAPTAIN FABER (Hampshire, Andover): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether assistant political officers serving up the country in Somaliland are allowed furniture or equipment.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): It is understood that assistant political officers in Somaliland are provided with tents and articles of camp equipment, but the Secretary of State has no exact information as to the extent of this equipment.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clxxvii., 86–7.

CAPTAIN FABER asked whether other political officers were not allowed furniture.

MR. CHURCHILL pointed out that it was obviously impossible to treat officers in a wild country far from civilisation in the same way as those stationed on the coasts.

CAPTAIN FABER: Did not the Colonial Office write a letter promising that officers going up country should either receive furniture or an equivalent in money? Is it not a fact that that promise has not been carried out?

MR. CHURCHILL: If any such engagement has been entered into by the Colonial Office I will certainly see that it is fulfilled.

Sugar Convention Memorials.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will place in the Library for inspection by Members the memorials received from public bodies in the United Kingdom and the Colonies concerning the Sugar Convention.

MR. CHURCHILL: We are considering whether Papers can be laid, and if it is decided to do so, the memorials in question might well be included.

Transvaal Loan Bill.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if the draft of the Loan Bill to be introduced into the Transvaal Legislature has been or will be submitted to the Home Government for its consideration and approval.

MR. CHURCHILL: The draft Bill will receive the informal approval of His Majesty's Government.

The Grand Duchy of Luxemburg.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that a regency is about to be established in the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg, owing to the precarious state of health of the reigning Grand Duke; and whether, seeing that England was one of the signatory Powers to the Treaty of London of 1867, guaranteeing the neutrality of the Grand Duchy, and that a protest against the proposed regency has been lodged by a claimant to the throne in the eventuality of the death of the present Grand Duke, and that this protest is now under consideration by the Chamber of Representatives of the Duchy, the British Government will use or offer its good offices to effect an amicable solution of the question and to safeguard the interests of the lawful heir, in conformity with the constitution and with the Nassau Family Pact of 1783, in which house the crown of Luxemburg was hereditary.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. RUNCIMAN, Dewsbury; for Sir EDWARD GREY): It is not, so far as my right hon. friend is aware, proposed to establish a regency during the lifetime of the Grand Duke. The Bill now under the consideration of the Chamber of Deputies of the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg regulates the succession, and the regency during a minority, together with matters relative to the patrimony of the reigning house. No protest has so far been received against the provisions of this Bill, and my right hon. friend is not therefore in a position to anticipate what the effect of one would be.

Vaccination Exemption Certificate Fees.

MR. J. D. WHITE (Dumbartonshire): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he can state what was the aggregate amount of the fees paid in respect of certificates of conscientious objection obtained under Section 2 of the Vaccination Act, 1898, in the last, or any, financial year; and whether all, or what proportion of, such fees were treated as public money.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): My right hon. friend has asked me to answer this Question. It would be impossible to say how much of the total amount of the fees taken by justices' clerks in any year was taken in respect of applications for certificates under the Vaccination Act, 1898. All the fees so received are public moneys to be accounted for by the justices' clerk to the county and borough treasurer; and in London to the Receiver for the Metropolitan Police District.

Vaccination Exemption—Tilney St. Lawrence Schoolmaster.

MR. GEORGE WHITE (Norfolk, N.W.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that J. F. Allsop, headmaster of Tilney St. Lawrence schools (who has previously obtained certificates of exemption for two of his boys), has been summoned to appear at the Wisbech borough police court, on Thursday next, for failing to have his younger son vaccinated, though he has attempted on three separate occasions to obtain a certificate of exemption from the Terrington police court, and on each application one of the magistrates was prepared to sign; whether he is aware that Allsop will now have to travel seven miles to the court where the summons is made returnable, though the applications were made at the police court of his own district.

MR. GLADSTONE: My right hon. friend has asked me to answer this Question. I have no knowledge of this case apart from the statements in the Question, but inconveniences of the kind described are due, as I have often said before, to the provisions of the existing law, and I hope that the remedy will soon be found by the passing into law of the Bill which is now before the House. The attention of justices has twice been called by circular to what I am advised is the proper view of the provisions of the existing Act, in many cases I regret to say without any effect whatever; but I have no authority to interfere with the discretion placed in their hands.

Taximeters for London Cabs.

*CAPTAIN FABER: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has granted permission to London hansom cabs to be fitted with taximeters.

MR. GLADSTONE: I may refer the hon. Member to my printed Answer to the hon. Member for Darlington, which was circulated with the votes this morning.† My intention was, and is, to enable every cab, whether horse-drawn or motor, to use a taximeter; but a difficulty has arisen in connection with such taximeters for horse-cabs as have hitherto been presented for approval. I am taking steps to remove the difficulty, which I hope to do very shortly; and besides this I am about to introduce legislation to prevent similar inconvenience in future.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR (Kildare, N.) asked whether the motor-cabs in London were at present running illegally.

MR. GLADSTONE said that that was not the case. No difficulty had arisen under the new order in regard to the motor-cabs.

Licensing Legislation.

*CAPTAIN FABER: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in introducing licensing legislation next session, he will bear in mind the fact that the liquor bill of this country is not increasing, as a few years ago used to be the case as trade improved.

MR. GLADSTONE: I shall certainly take into account any trustworthy information that I can obtain bearing on the operation of the licensing laws, but I ought perhaps to point out that according to Dr. Dawson Burns' annual statement there was an increase in the national liquor bill in 1906.

*CAPTAIN FABER: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the words in the Question are the same as those used by the President of the Board of Trade last week in this House?

MR. GLADSTONE: I am not.

Marriage Laws.

MR. HAY MORGAN (Cornwall, Truro): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the case of Amos Patchett, who was on the 7th June, 1907, committed by the magistrates of Nottingham City to take his trial at the assizes for making a declaration before the registrar of marriages that he believed there was no impediment of kindred or alliance, or other lawful hindrance, to his marriage with a certain person who was in fact a sister of his deceased wife; and whether, in view of the fact that the demand for this declaration has been the means of bringing disgrace upon a respectable but unlettered man, and also in view of the fact that such a declaration is not demanded from persons who are married in a church or chapel, he will take steps to secure the discontinuance of the practice of demanding such a declaration as a preliminary to marriage at a registrar's office.

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† See page 512.

MR. GLADSTONE: I had not heard of the case until my attention was called to it by my hon. friend's Question. While the trial is pending, it is manifestly undesirable that I should discuss the circumstances of the case; but I must not be understood as in any way assenting to my hon. friend's suggestion that the law should be altered.

British Light Ships and Submarine Bell Signals.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can give any information as to the success in aiding navigation of the submarine bell signals at Flushing West harbour and the Haaks lightship; whether he is aware that similar apparatus is being installed in several other Dutch lightships; and whether His Majesty's Government have considered the question of the installation of similar signals in British lightships.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): I have no information as to the success of the submarine signalling apparatus at the places mentioned, but the Admiralty and the Trinity House have been favourably impressed by experiments which they have carried out with the apparatus, and the question of installing it on certain light vessels off the coast of this country is under consideration. I would refer the hon. Member to the Answer given to a Question on this subject by the hon. Member for West Cavan on 27th June last.‡

Railway Compensation and Insurance.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, College): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he is aware that railway companies in England, when paying compensation for injury or death on their railways, deduct from the amount of compensation any sum which the claimants may have received from an accident assurance company; that the privilege does not exist in Scotland; and if he will rectify, by legislation or otherwise, this preferential treatment.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I am aware that railway companies in England in paying compensation for death on their railways in respect of claims arising under Lord Campbell's Act are entitled to deduct from the amount of compensation any sum which the claimant may have received from an accident insurance company, and that this state of things does not exist in Scotland. It is my desire at a convenient opportunity to bring in legislation to prevent such deductions.

Census of Production.

*MR. SMEATON (Stirlingshire): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether there is any prospect of the first Census of Production being ready before the end of 1908; and whether he can see his way to show, in juxtaposition with the analysis of Home production, a similar analysis, under corresponding heads, of the production of the United States, Germany, and any other European countries.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: It will not be possible for the results of the first Census of Production to be ready before the end of 1908. I will consider when the results of our own census are available how far it may be possible to make a comparison with the results of the United States Census, but I am advised that no comparison will be possible with Germany, or with any other European country, as no corresponding Census of Production has been instituted in those countries.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: Are the arrangements now proceeding?

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‡ See (4) *Debates*, clxxvii., 99.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Yes; a Committee is sitting and preparing the forms and schedules.

Local Government Board Medical Inspectors.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board, in view of the fact that the Estimates show that, under sub-head R of the Local Government Board Vote, a salary of £500 per annum is paid to a temporary medical inspector, will he explain how long this temporary appointment has been in existence.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): The appointment has been in existence since June, 1905. It was made because one of the permanent medical inspectors is at present acting as inspector for the purposes of the administration of the Sale of Food and Drugs Acts.

Royal Commission on Whisky.

*MR. WILES (Islington, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, having regard to the litigation that has taken place on the question of whisky between the metropolitan borough council of Islington and various manufacturers, and the difficulties and deadlock which have arisen therefrom, he will take action, either by inquiry or legislation, so that the whole question may be permanently settled.

MR. JOHN BURNS: The Government have had this matter under consideration, and they propose that a Royal Commission should be issued to make inquiry with regard to it.

*MR. WILES: Can the right hon. Gentleman state the terms of reference?

MR. JOHN BURNS: They are in draft, but I am not yet in a position to state them to the House.

Indian Mail Contract.

*MR. SMEATON: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether the new contract with the Peninsular and Oriental Company for the mail service between India and this country provides for a total acceleration of only eight hours; if so, seeing that this acceleration represents little more than a quickening of the Suez Canal transit, whether it is still possible to require an accelerated ocean voyage between Bombay and Aden; and for how many years the contract is to be in force.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I beg leave to refer the hon. Member to the reply to a Question asked in this House on 27th May, in which I stated that the new contract with the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company would be for a period of seven years, and would provide for an acceleration on the Indian section of eight hours in each direction, as compared with the present service. It was not found practicable to obtain any further acceleration at the present time.

*MR. SMEATON: In view of the growing rates of speed in all the great lines from year to year, would it not be possible still to insert in the contract a stipulation that the speed rate should be revised after a break of three or four years?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON suggested that the hon. Member should speak to him on the subject privately.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.): Is the eight hours' acceleration the only alteration?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: There will be acceleration in other respects.

Education Report.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he is aware that on the 17th of June there was issued by the Board of Education a page of Volume 17 of the Special Reports on Educational Subjects in substitution for the corresponding page of the volume issued on 10th June, and that this was done in order to omit two words; and whether similar steps will now be taken to correct the unwarranted reflection on Irish educational efforts which appears on another page of the same volume.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): The correction to which the hon. Member refers occurs in the prefatory note, for the accuracy of which the Board of Education are responsible. As I have already stated, the responsibility for the opinions expressed in the Report is the author's, and it does not, therefore, rest with the Board to make any correction in it.

MR. BOLAND: Has the writer been informed that his statements have been challenged?

MR. McKENNA: I have directed that a copy of all Questions and Answers on the subject shall be sent to him.

MR. KETTLE (Tyrone, E.): And is he still unrepentant?

MR. McKENNA: I have not heard.

Sheriff Clerks in Scotland.

MR. WATT: I beg to ask the Lord-Advocate whether he is aware that some sheriff clerks in Scotland are engaged in other pursuits, commercial or professional; whether this is in accordance with the views of his Department; and, if not, whether he will take steps to have the practice discontinued.

THE LORD-ADVOCATE (Mr. THOMAS SHAW, Hawick Burghs): The usual restriction attached to such appointments is that the sheriff clerk shall not practice as a solicitor or law agent, or be a partner of any firm of solicitors or law agents. This form was adopted in 1883, and has been followed except in a few special cases. While it is impossible to go back upon the terms of past appointments, I may say that I am in favour, as a general rule, of the practice settled as above being followed.

MR. WATT: Is it not the fact that holders of many of these appointments are engaged in commercial pursuits?

[No Answer was returned.]

Dr. Bulstrode's Report on Phthisis.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, in view of the fact that a Report by Dr. Bulstrode in regard to phthisis in England and Wales is about to be published, will he reconsider the expediency of publishing a Memorandum on this subject by the Local Government Board's medical inspector.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): The Board has not prepared any special Memorandum on phthisis, but they are considering what further measures are necessary to assist the local authorities in carrying out the recommendations contained in the Circular of March, 1906.

School Water Supplies in the Island of Lewis.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, if he will state the number of public schools in the Island of Lewis to which a water supply is not now laid on, and the names of such schools.

MR. SINCLAIR: So far as I am informed the number of schools not provided with a laid-on water supply is fifteen, and the names of the schools are as follows:—Balallan, Cromore, Fidigarry, Graver, Grimshader, Carishader, Knockanthu, Leumerava, Lurebost, Planasker, Airidhbhruach, Barvas, Borve, Lionel and Skigersta.

Cromore-Gravir Road, Lewis.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state what progress has been made with the Cromore-Gravir road, Island of Lewis; and when the work of constructing the road is expected to be finished.

MR. SINCLAIR: I am informed that the District Committee are doing all they can to complete the construction of this road with the use of local labour only, and that they expect the work will be finished about the end of July if the required number of men are available.

Beauly and Ness Rivers Estuary.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland in view of the fact that at pages 30 and 32 of the First Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland the opinion is expressed that the estuary of the Beauly and Ness rivers has been too far extended, and that there is no sufficient ground for extending the estuary beyond a line from Chanonry Point to Fort George, will he consider the expediency of calling for a Report on the subject, especially having regard to the fact that the estuary at present extends into the open sea four miles beyond the point recommended in the Fishery Board Report.

MR. SINCLAIR: The point shall be considered.

Highland Joint Tenancies.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, in view of the number of joint tenancies in the Highland crofting counties, will arrangements be made to deal with such cases in the Small Landholders (Scotland) Bill now before Parliament.

MR. SINCLAIR: The point is under consideration.

Flags on Scottish Public Buildings.

MR. C. E. PRICE (Edinburgh, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether it is permissible to use a flag on public and other buildings in Scotland having a similar coat-of-arms to that placed in the courtyard at Holyrood Palace showing the unicorn on the dexter side and the lion on the sinister side of the shield, with the Scottish lion rampant in the first and fourth quarterings; and, if not, on what ground are the objections taken.

MR. SINCLAIR: I can only refer my hon. friend to the recent Circular issued to police authorities in Scotland, of which I will send him a copy.

MR. C. E. PRICE: Does not that Circular merely refer to the Royal Arms?

MR. SINCLAIR: And to the Royal Standard also.

Trials in Ireland.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland if he is aware that the Dungiven magistrates, in the recent case of Mr. John Harrington, national school teacher, had either permitted Mr. E. F. Bannon, inspector of national schools, to act as justice of the peace, or had taken evidence in secret without oath or opportunity to the defendant's solicitor to cross-examine him; and, seeing that, in consequence of these proceedings, the case was quashed by the King's Bench after Harrington had suffered a week's imprisonment, what action, if any, he proposes to take in order to avoid such proceedings in future.

*THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. REDMOND BARRY, Tyrone, N.): My right hon. friend the Chief Secretary has fully stated the facts of this case in reply to a Question put by the hon. Member. The action of the magistrates in questioning the inspector in their private room instead of in open Court appears to have been due merely to an error of judgment. In any event, however, my right hon. friend the Attorney-General has no jurisdiction over magistrates in regard to the exercise of their judicial functions.

MR. SLOAN: Has the Attorney-General no jurisdiction?

MR. REDMOND BARRY: Not over the magistrates. A communication is, I believe, to be addressed to the National Board on the subject.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether he intends to apply for a change of venue in the case of Mr. Peter J. Kelly, J.P., who has been committed for trial at the Galway assizes on a charge of inciting to murder Lord Ashtown.

I beg also to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether he intends to move for a change of venue in the case of Mr. D. Beirne, J.P., and others, who have been sent for trial by the Hillstreet magistrates on charges of unlawful and riotous assembly and assaulting the police on the 28th May last.

MR. REDMOND BARRY: My right hon. friend has asked me to answer these two Questions. No application with a view to having the venue changed in these cases could be made until after indictment found by the grand jury at the approaching assizes. In the meantime my right hon. friend is not prepared to make any definite statement upon the subject.

Housing of Urban Working Classes in Ireland.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say whether he intends to take any action to amend The Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890, whereby local authorities may acquire larger powers than they have hitherto enjoyed under that Act, and so that they may be able to borrow money for the purpose of providing dwelling accommodation for the working classes in the cities and towns in Ireland on the same terms as are provided under the Labourers' (Ireland) Acts for the housing of the working classes in the rural districts.

I beg also to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will take steps to secure for the workers in cities and urban districts in Ireland facilities for the building of artisans' dwellings on the same terms as were given to the labourers in the rural districts in Ireland under the Labourers' Act of 1906, by enabling the local authorities to acquire money for the purpose at 3¼ per cent., principal and interest repayable in 68½ years.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): A In reply to these two Questions I can only refer to my Answer to the Question on this subject which was put to me yesterday by the hon. Member for North Westmeath.† I am not in a position to promise legislation in the matter.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: Will the right hon. Gentleman do his best to see that legislation on behalf of the working classes in the towns is brought in next year?

MR. BIRRELL: I will do my best. I recognise the importance of the subject.

Labourers' Cottage Schemes.

MR. HALPIN (Clare, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Local Government Board inspector has power, when making his inquiry as to the applicants for labourers' cottages, to allow applicants for cottages that the guardians rejected for personal motives to be included in the scheme; and, if the inspector has no power to amend the scheme as he thinks proper, will he take steps for the amendment of the Act so as to give the inspector power to do justice to the labourers.

MR. BIRRELL: The Local Government Board's inspector has power to take action in any case in which the rural district council may have neglected to consider a representation for a labourer's cottage, but it would be entirely contrary to the recognised principle of local responsibility in these matters that the inspector should be given power to override the decision of the council in a case to which they have given full consideration.

Reinstated Tenants—Alleged Sales of Stocks.

CAPTAIN CRAIG (Down, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many cases have been brought to the notice of the authorities of reinstated evicted tenants selling the farm or stock, for the purchase of which money was advanced them by the Estates Commissioners, in order to discharge civil debts incurred prior to reinstatement or other claims; and whether such tenants, reinstated at the public expense, are at liberty to dispose of their holding and stock, retain the proceeds, and move to another part of the country or go abroad.

MR. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners are not aware of any cases in which reinstated evicted tenants have, in order to discharge debts incurred prior to reinstatement, sold their farms or stock for the purchase of which the Commissioners made advances. The Commissioners have no power to interfere with the sale by a tenant purchaser of his interest in the purchased holding, but it is the Commissioners' present practice to require a purchaser who obtains a grant to sign a bond charging the holding with the repayment of the grant if he should transfer the holding within five years without the Commissioners' consent.

MR. MOORE (Armagh, N.): How long has that practice been enforced?

MR. BIRRELL: I will inquire. I know it is the present practice.

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† See page 341.

No Boycotting at Dromahair.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many persons in the neighbourhood of Dromahair, county Leitrim, are boycotted; how many miles have they to travel to obtain the bare necessaries of life, have their horses shod, and dispose of their stock; can he give the reasons why they are boycotted, and state the number of police employed for their protection.

MR. BIRRELL: The police authorities inform me that no persons in the neighbourhood of Dromahair or within ten miles of it are boycotted.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: I am glad to hear it.

Case of Patrick McBride, of Toomaline.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the date on which Patrick McBride, of Toomaline, Doon, county Limerick, was made a free grant of £180 for stock and £20 for buildings; whether the inspector who examined the holding and recommended the grant is a near relative of Patrick McBride; whether an uncle of the inspector has taken possession of the stock purchased with the free grant made by the Estates Commissioners for a debt of his own; and whether the further sum of £20 granted has been expended for building purposes.

MR. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners inform me that the grant of £180 to Patrick Kilbride for the purchase of stock was made in February last. The grant of £20 for buildings, though sanctioned, has not yet been made. The Commissioners are informed that the inspector in question is not a near relative of Kilbride, and that the stock has not been seized by an uncle of the inspector.

Dungiven School Teacher's Case.

MR. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if his attenton has been called to the case of Mr. John Harrington, who was recently imprisoned by the Dungiven magistrates, and whose judgment has been quashed by the King's Bench; if he is aware that the district inspector of the National Board entered the magistrates' room when they retired from the bench to consult on the case; did the magistrates convict Harrington at the instance of the Board's inspector; and, if so, what action, if any, has been taken in the matter; and whether, in view of the treatment of Harrington, the Board will consider the advisability of directing their inspectors that any evidence they have to give in court against teachers shall be given on oath, so as to afford an opportunity for cross-examination.

MR. BIRRELL: In this case Mr. Harrington, who is a national school teacher, was convicted by the magistrates of an assault on a pupil, and the King's Bench Division subsequently quashed the conviction. It appears that the National Board's inspector attended to watch the case before the magistrates, and that after the evidence had been heard and the magistrates had retired to consult as to their decision they called the inspector to their room and asked him to state the Board's rules in regard to corporal punishment, which he did. The inspector was not a witness in the case, and he was not asked nor did he offer any opinion upon the facts or merits of the case. Having regard to these facts, the Commissioners do not consider it necessary to issue any instructions to their inspectors in the matter.

MR. SLOAN asked if it was not the case that it was on the advice of this inspector that the magistrates gave a decision which was quashed by King's Bench, and would the right hon. Gentleman instruct the National Board to prevent their inspectors consulting with the magistrates in such a fashion that they could not be subjected to cross-examination.

MR. BIRRELL: Probably the magistrates were ill-advised in not getting the information from the Inspector in open court. I will communicate with the Commissioners.

Kanturk Police.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the constabulary authorities can explain why two district inspectors are now stationed in Kanturk, Newmarket district of the East Riding of the Cork County, within four miles of each other; and whether, in view of the fact that the Recorder for this riding has frequently and recently referred to the peaceable state of the district, the police authorities will continue to retain the services of two highly-paid inspectors in this part of the county.

MR. BIRRELL: I am informed that for many years past Kanturk and Newmarket have been the head-quarters of separate and distinct police districts, each of which is necessarily in charge of a district inspector. The police authorities inform me that the present state of these districts would not warrant their amalgamation for police purposes. So far as I can ascertain the Recorder has not made any recent statement as regards the condition of these districts.

MR. FLYNN: Seeing that the district councillors in this district have protested against the extra police and the consequent police tax, are not their views to have any weight with the Irish Government?

MR. BIRRELL: We have to consider the reports of the police. There are several special protection posts in this district, and I do not, therefore, see my way to override those views.

Irish Evicted Tenants.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, as would appear from the special Report of the Estates Commissioners, 8,401 applications for reinstatement have been received from evicted tenants, and of these 5,368 have been ruled out upon various grounds; if so, whether in the case of these 5,368 disappointed applicants any intimation of the decision of the Estates Commissioners in each case has been communicated to them; and, if not, will such intimation, with the grounds of the decision, be communicated prior to the Second Reading of the Bill, if that stage is ever reached.

MR. BIRRELL: If the hon. and gallant Member will refer to the 20th paragraph of the Estates Commissioners' Special Report on Evicted Tenants he will find that the number of applications rejected by the Commissioners is 2,945, and not 5,368 as stated in the Question. In cases in which the Commissioners have rejected the applications, it has been their practice to inform the applicant of the fact.

Kenny Estate, County Galway.

MR. MOONEY (Newry): On behalf of the hon. Member for East Galway, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state when may the tenants upon the Kenny estate, Longford, county Galway, expect to have the lands purchased by the Congested Districts Board divided.

MR. BIRRELL: The Congested Districts Board anticipate that they will be in a position to divide the untenanted land on the Kenny estate towards the end of the present year. The Board propose to enlarge the holdings of the few existing tenants on the estate, and the remainder of the untenanted land will be otherwise disposed of.

Irish Training Colleges and the Irish Language.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has yet been furnished with a copy of the statement of the President of the Board of Education, made on the 26th instant, to the effect that regulations had been issued requiring that in training colleges in Wales provision should be made for the teaching of Welsh, and there must be on the staff of every training college in Wales at least one person competent to teach Welsh; and, if so, whether he will forward it to the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland, suggesting that a similar regulation should be made in respect to training colleges in Ireland.

MR. BIRRELL: I have received a copy of my right hon. friend's statement. I have referred the Question to the Commissioners of National Education, who inform me that in the training college which is under their direct control provision is already made for the teaching of Irish, and that similar provision is also made in most of the training colleges which are under local management. The

Commissioners do not consider that any further regulations on the subject are necessary.

Alleged Outrages at Ballyclog, Stewartstown.

MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a letter of the Protestant rector of Ballyclog, Stewartstown, in which that gentleman states that for the past ten years his church and himself have been boycotted all round, the church windows being broken on two occasions, his sheep and cattle chased and killed, his crops ruined, and himself made the victim of many other persecutions too numerous to mention, and this because he has refused to join the Orange Society; and whether he proposes to take any action in the matter?

MR. BIRRELL: My attention has been called to the letter in question, which was published in a newspaper. The police authorities inform me that the outrages of which the letter complains are purely imaginary.

MR. KETTLE: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware of other letters from this Protestant clergyman, in which he charges the local police with being under the control of the local Orange Lodge?

MR. BIRRELL: I have looked into this matter, and I can assure the hon. Gentleman I do not think any advantage is to be obtained by pursuing the subject any further.

Cattle Raid at Borrisokane.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the cattle were driven off two farms in the neighbourhood of Borrisokane, county Tipperary, early on Friday morning; whether the police had previous knowledge of the intentions of the crowd, and why they were not present in sufficient force to prevent the drives; and whether, seeing that other drives in this neighbourhood are threatened, he will increase the police force in the locality to a sufficient number to prevent further lawlessness.

MR. BIRRELL: I am informed that a few hours before this cattle drive occurred the police received information that it was likely to take place. Steps were at once taken to assemble all the available force, and eleven policemen were present when the crowd arrived. The crowd numbered about 250, and the police force was not strong enough to prevent them from driving off the cattle. Many of the offenders, however, were identified, and the evidence against them is being considered with a view to instituting a prosecution. The police will continue to take all possible measures to prevent the commission of these offences, but, as I have already stated, it would be impossible to station a sufficiently large force of police on every one of the numerous grazing farms in the country which may be threatened in this way.

MR. MOORE: Is it not the fact that the only farmers whose cattle are driven off in this neighbourhood are Protestants, and that no such drives take place on the farms of Catholics?

MR. BIRRELL: I do not know.

MR. MOORE: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will inquire.

Birr Disturbances—Attack on Major Dease, R.M.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the attack made upon Major Dease, R.M., at Birr, on Friday night; and what steps he proposes to take to protect from violence magistrates who discharge the obligations of their office.

VISCOUNT TURNOUR (Sussex, Horsham): At the same time may I ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Major Dease, resident magistrate, was struck by a stone when returning from the court-house at Birr, on Friday last; and whether in future he will take steps to ensure the safety of magistrates returning from the performance of their duty.

MR. BIRRELL: It is the fact that Major Dease was struck by a stone at Birr on Friday last, but I am glad to say that he was not hurt. He was not returning from the court-house at the time, the proceedings in court having concluded more than an hour before. The police were escorting prisoners to the station; Major Dease happened to be passing along the street when stones were thrown at the police, and he was unfortunately struck by one of the stones. The police were not aware that he would be there at the time. In the event of any further proceedings at Birr, the police will make full arrangements to secure the safety of the magistrates.

MR. KETTLE: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that this Resident Magistrate is a Catholic?

[No Answer was returned.]

Constable O'Halloran, Royal Irish Constabulary.

MR. LONSDALE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the claim of Constable William O'Halloran, Royal Irish Constabulary, for compensation for being maimed by shot while protecting Colonel Lopdell, at Rockmore, county Galway, on 9th October; whether any person was brought to justice for shooting this officer; and whether, seeing that Judge Anderson, while refusing the application, expressed the hope that an appeal would be lodged, the officer will have facilities for appealing to a higher tribunal.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a constable named O'Halloran was engaged in protecting the house of Colonel Lopdell, near Athenry, shot at on the 9th October last, grievously wounded, and maimed for life; is he aware that the Recorder of Galway has decided that O'Halloran is not entitled to compensation against the county; will he state what was O'Halloran's annual pay and emoluments at the date of the outrage; was he then qualified for promotion; what pension is he entitled to now, and will any, and what, addition be made to his normal pension by reason of his being maimed in the discharge of his duty; and has any person been made amenable to justice for shooting Constable O'Halloran.

MR. BIRRELL: I will Answer these two Questions together. It is the fact that Constable O'Halloran received a gunshot wound while on duty on 9th October last. The Recorder of Galway has decided that the constable is not entitled to compensation from the county for malicious injury. In so deciding the Recorder said that if his decision should be reversed on appeal no one would be better pleased than he, but he pointed out that his decision was based upon a judgment of the Court of Appeal in a similar case. If, however, the constable should desire to appeal the Inspector-General will permit him to do so at his own risk and expense. Three men were arrested for shooting the constable, but were discharged for want of evidence. The facts as to the constable's pay and possible pension are fully stated in my reply to a Question put by the hon. Member for North Londonderry on 16th April.† If it should be determined that he has been incapacitated for further service, his case will receive full consideration when his pension comes to be fixed.

Birr Disturbances.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a report of the riotous proceedings at Birr on Friday night last; whether he will state the cause of the disturbance and how many casualties occurred among the constabulary; and whether any arrests were made.

MR. BIRRELL: On Friday last thirteen prisoners were being taken to the railway station at Birr for conveyance to prison, when stones were thrown at the police. About twenty policemen were struck with stones, but none were seriously injured. The assailants were at once dispersed by a baton charge, but no arrests were possible. The crowd who threw stones were strangers in the town, and the police who were stoned did not belong to the local force. As a result one offender only was identified, and particulars of the evidence against him are being obtained with a view to a prosecution.

MR. SLOAN: What has been the cost of these disturbances?

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† See (4) *Debates*, clxxii., 774.

MR. BIRRELL: I do not know.

MR. LONSDALE: How many police are there there now?

MR. BIRRELL: I will inquire.

Insanitary Dwellings in Ireland.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will take steps to amend the present sanitary laws in Ireland by giving the local sanitary authorities power to enter into possession of unsanitary dwellings or unsanitary areas, and cause such areas or dwellings to be put into a proper sanitary condition, and to retain such property in their possession until the receipts from such property shall have paid all the expenses incurred by such local authorities in the carrying out of the necessary sanitary improvements.

MR. BIRRELL: The Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890, confers full powers on local authorities to take proceedings with the object of having insanitary dwellings put into proper condition, and, in the event of default, to secure the demolition of the insanitary buildings. The local authorities have no power to enter into possession of such dwellings or areas and retain the receipts of the property in order to pay for repairs, and it is not proposed to undertake legislation with that end.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: Have the local authority no power to enter into possession of insanitary dwellings?

MR. BIRRELL: I do not think they have.

Irish School House Grants.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state what are the grounds on which the Government and the Lords of the Treasury have refused to sanction the proposal of the Commissioners of National Education, made in January, 1906, so to alter rule 194 of the Commissioners' rules and regulations that they may be empowered to award grants towards building school houses for separate boys' and girls' schools where, as at Kilmeedy, in the county of Limerick, an average attendance of thirty-five pupils is maintained in each school.

MR. BIRRELL: The proposed alteration in rule 194 was not sanctioned because it would tend to the multiplication of small schools. It has been strongly urged that the amalgamation rather than the multiplication of such schools is needed in Ireland.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: Will the right hon. Gentleman act as a peacemaker and bring about a settlement so as to avoid friction in this district? The parents and managers are determined not to have amalgamation.

MR. BIRRELL: I am aware there are difficulties, but I do not see my way to alter the rule.

Belmullet Railway.

MR. CONOR O'KELLY (Mayo, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is in a position to make any announcement as to the construction of a line of railway to Belmullet.

MR. BIRRELL: I am not yet in a position to make any statement in this matter. The negotiations with the Midland Great Western Railway Company are still proceeding.

MR. CONOR O'KELLY asked whether pressure could not be exercised to secure a settlement.

MR. BIRRELL said no one was more anxious for a settlement than he was. An offer had been made to the Railway Company, and it was for that body to say whether or not they would accept it.

Wexford Land Sales.

MR. FFRENCH (Wexford, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, as fully three-fourths of the land of Wexford County has now been sold out, and as many tenants are paying 3½ or 4 instead of 3¼ per cent., an inspector will be sent down in order that the sales may be completed.

MR. BIRRELL: I am not in a position to add anything to the reply which

I gave to the hon. Member's similar Question on 24th April, namely, that the Estates Commissioners deal with cases of land purchase in order of priority of application, and it would be unfair to other counties that Wexford cases should be taken before their proper turn.

MR. FFRENCH: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware there are a large number of cases awaiting settlement?

MR. BIRRELL: Yes, I know there is a great block.

Boxwell Evicted Tenants.

MR. FFRENCH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware the Boxwell evicted tenants have not yet been restored to their homes, although the inspector visited the estate last January; and whether he can hold out any hope of an immediate settlement.

MR. BIRRELL: The owner of the estate referred to has intimated to the Estates Commissioners that he will only deal with the question of reinstating the evicted tenants upon the sale of the estate as a whole. The Commissioners are at present making inquiries with a view to the purchase of the estate, and if they should acquire it they will consider the cases of the evicted tenants.

Agrarian Outrages.

VISCOUNT TURNOUR: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state the number of cases of agrarian outrage which have occurred between 1st June, 1906, and 1st June, 1907; and in how many of those cases arrests have been made.

MR. BIRRELL: The number of cases of agrarian outrages which occurred during the period mentioned was 271. In twenty-nine of these cases arrests were made, the number of persons arrested being 121. In six other cases, proceedings by summons were taken against thirty-one persons.

MR. FLYNN: Do these figures include threatening notices, a number of which are known to be written by the persons receiving them?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! Notice should be given of that Question.

Damage of Cables by Trawlers on the Kerry Coast.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that there are thirteen cables between the Blaskett Islands and Scariff Island on the Kerry coast, and that in the outer Ballinskelligs Bay of these cables ten are laid to America, two to England, and one to France, that a Commission was appointed to protect these cables in time of war, and that the capital sunk in the working of these cables amounts to about £20,000,000; and whether, seeing that these cables are frequently broken by steam trawlers, which come in at night and trawl in the shallow water where these cables overhang, and that on a recent occasion a cable steamer spent fourteen days grappling for a cable which was broken by a trawler, he will represent to the proper authorities that this portion of the coast should be protected from the illegal trawling indulged in by these boats.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: No representations as to damage having been caused by trawlers to the cables referred to in the hon. Member's question have reached me until quite recently, when one of the companies concerned made complaint on the subject. Inquiries are being made, and if it should prove that the circumstances warrant it, I will make representations to the proper authorities with a view to any steps which may be practicable being taken for the protection of these cables.

Russia and the Sugar Convention.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether any representations have been made to this Government by Russia as to any disadvantages they may have suffered from the Sugar Convention.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): Yes, Sir, representations were made by Russia and were followed up by the surtax on Indian and Ceylon teas.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Was this surtax general, or did it only apply to tea carried over the Manchurian railway?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I must ask for notice of that Question.

Sugar Convention.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether the delegates from this country will proceed to the meeting of the Sugar Convention at Brussels; and, if so, when.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Answer to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative, provided all the Powers concerned agree to the meeting; with regard to the second part no date has yet been fixed for the meeting of the Sugar Commission.

PROCEDURE IN GRAND COMMITTEES.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London) said he desired to call the attention of Mr. Speaker to a point of some importance in regard to procedure in Grand Committee. He understood that in Standing Committee A, when discussing the Public Health Bill, a large number of clauses were passed when a quorum was not present. Under the Standing Orders regulating the proceedings in Grand Committee it was the duty of the clerk of the Committee to call the Chairman's attention to the fact that there was not a quorum present, and thereupon it was the duty of the Chairman to adjourn the Committee or suspend the sitting until a quorum had been obtained. He was informed that in Standing Committee A the clerk did call the Chairman's attention to the absence of a quorum. Nevertheless, the Chairman decided to go on with the business; and in these circumstances the greater portion of the Bill was passed through the Committee stage. He wished to ask what course the House ought now to pursue in the matter.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Baronet who was Chairman of the Committee is present, and perhaps he would like to make a statement before I say anything.

*SIR WILLIAM HOLLAND (Yorkshire, W.R., Rotherham) said that under the strict interpretation of the Standing Order he must confess himself at fault and bow to the Speaker's will. But his offence might appear less grave if he were permitted a word of personal explanation. He was in a dilemma in regard to the Bill, and took the course he did take with a full sense of his responsibility under the special circumstances of the case. Here was a Bill of 142 clauses of the utmost possible importance in the interest of the public health; and questions of public health brooked no delay. It embodied the experience and the wishes of the Police and Sanitary Committee. There were thirty-three pages of Amendments, and after a short discussion last Monday it was apparent that the whole of those Amendments were about to be accepted by the promoters of the Bill; so that practically he regarded the measure as an agreed Bill. A quorum was present when there was anything to be discussed; but when there was nothing left but the mechanical work of putting a large number of agreed clauses he confessed the quorum was not throughout fully maintained. In his judgment, an adjournment at that particular stage, after so much work had been done, might have been fatal to the chances of the Bill passing during the present session, because he thought there would have been difficulties in getting a quorum together on a subsequent occasion. He founded himself on the precedent of the Speaker, who does not instantly suspend the House when fewer than forty Members are present. He waits until some Member notices it. And if any member of the Committee had called his attention to the fact that the quorum was not maintained he should instantly have suspended the proceedings; but, as every Member of the Committee was very anxious to have the Bill passed, none of them were likely to call his attention to that circumstance. With this explanation, he submitted himself with the utmost respect to the judgment of the House.

*MR. SPEAKER: After the explanation which has been given by the hon. Baronet, the House will probably be inclined, under the special circumstances of the case, to condone any irregularity which may have occurred. At the same time, I think, for future guidance it would be just as well that I should observe to the House that Standing

Order 62 is very particular. It says that if at any time during the sitting of a Select Committee the quorum fixed by the House shall not be present, the clerk of the Committee shall call the attention of the Chairman to the fact, and the Chairman shall thereupon suspend the proceedings until a quorum be present or adjourn the Committee to some future day. By Standing Order 47 the procedure of Select Committees is made applicable to Standing Committees. Therefore, I take it that under the Standing Orders of the House, for the future, it will always be the duty of the clerk to call the attention of the Chairman to the absence of a quorum, and the Chairman must take action thereupon. The right hon. Gentleman has asked me what would happen supposing any irregularity were committed in Grand Committee. It is rather difficult to deal with hypothetical cases, but on the assumption that the Committee met and proceeded without a quorum, I should be of opinion that the Committee, properly speaking, was never constituted and did not meet, and that none of the work done could be accepted as being the work of that particular Committee. If there is a quorum when a Committee begins its work and that quorum melts away, it will be for the House, I think, in each case to determine whether it would be necessary to recommit the Bill. I do not think that I have vested in me any power to strike out the Amendments made by that Committee, for I should have no knowledge of the exact moment when a quorum was or was not present. Therefore, I could not undertake any such duty. But in each case where an irregularity of that sort has been committed, the House would desire, on the facts being brought to its attention, to consider whether it would be necessary or desirable to recommit the Bill.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR pointed out that most important functions of the House had now been relegated to Grand Committee; and therefore he desired to ask the Speaker or the Prime Minister how they were to deal with cases in which they had reason to believe that a Committee had not obeyed the Standing Orders. The original difficulty arose from there being no authentic record of what took place in the Committee. But, apart from that, there was the more serious difficulty that a breach of the rules having been alleged and a Motion being put down on the Paper in consequence, that Motion could only be dealt with in the ordinary way unless the Government gave time for its discussion or it could be raised as a question of privilege. There might be the extremely embarrassing position of a Bill coming on for the Report Stage, Members being conscious of the Bill having passed through Committee by irregular procedure. He asked whether a Motion regarding the regularity or irregularity of the Committee procedure would be a matter of privilege.

*MR. SPEAKER: I am afraid my answer to that question must be no. But I may perhaps make this observation. There are particular irregularities committed by Committees, for instance, in connection with financial arrangements, the insertion of a clause involving a charge upon the people without the previous assent of the House—irregularities of that kind I should be prepared to deal with, and I think I am the proper person to do so. But an irregularity such as was the subject matter of the first question put to me in connection with the Public Health Bill, that is a subject for the House to deal with, not for me. Difficulty really arises from the fact that the House is discussing a hypothetical case, and it is a little difficult to have in mind all cases of irregularity that may arise.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR asked if an undoubted irregularity arose requiring the attention of the House, could that be brought forward as a matter of privilege.

*MR. SPEAKER: No, that would not be a matter of privilege; the proper course would be to make a Motion to recommit the Bill, and such a Motion would have precedence on the Report stage, and the Member making it could state the grounds for recommittal.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR asked the Prime Minister whether, seeing that in substance the ruling of the Speaker was that a breach of the Standing Orders being committed a Motion condoning the action of the Chairman could be carried by a Party majority, the procedure in Standing Committees did not deserve careful attention.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) asked whether it was not usual for anything that occurred in Committee to be reported by the Chairman or some Member who was present? Was it not most irregular for a Member who was not present to raise the question?

*MR. SPEAKER: When the matter was brought to the attention of the House, I first asked the Chairman of the Committee if he had any observations to offer, and I think the House has heard from him what took place in Committee.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs) said a formal irregularity had been committed in regard to the Public Health Bill. All the business, as he understood, that was transacted while the Committee was short of a quorum was the arrangement of agreed matter, and therefore no harm had been done. What reason was there to expect that the irregularity would be followed in other Committees? Standing Committees had been in operation for many years, and they were transacting now the same sort of business with the exception that the Chairman had power to apply the closure. Therefore, until they heard of some flagrant iniquity being committed by a Standing Committee, such as had not occurred yet, he thought they might be content to leave matters as they stood. The fears of the right hon. Gentleman appeared to be entirely conjectural.

SIR F. BANBURY (City of London) said that in the Scottish Standing Committee there had been similar attempts to carry on business without the presence of a quorum of Members.

*MR. SPEAKER: After what has occurred to-day, those who now sit and those who will sit as Chairmen will be well aware of the duties of the position.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN asked if it could be made a rule that the absence of a quorum should be entered on the record of a Committee's proceedings.

*MR. SPEAKER: I think if everything had been done that ought to have been done there would be a record that, attention being called to the absence of a quorum, the Committee adjourned; but, owing to the fact that something was done that ought not to have been done, the record was imperfect.

BALLOT ACT (1872) AMENDMENT BILL.

*MR. DUNN (Cornwall, Camborne) asked leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Ballot Act of 1872, and to provide for the taking of a second ballot at Parliamentary and other elections. He did not think there was any apology needed for his action in view of the fact that they were on the eve of a very interesting election, which in itself demonstrated the necessity for some such amendment of the law as he was proposing. The mischief with which he sought to deal was a growing one. At one time there were only two Parties—historic Parties—in the State—the Liberal and the Conservative. Then there grew up the Nationalist Party, confined, no doubt, to Ireland; and now they had a fourth Party—the Labour Party, and the result in the pending election would undoubtedly be that the candidate who was elected would not represent the majority of the electors voting at the election. The other day there was a contest at Cockermouth, the result of which was proclaimed a great victory for the Tariff Reform Party, yet the successful candidate at such election did not poll a majority of the electors who voted. Even the Conservative Party were divided between Free Traders and Tariff Reformers, and these differences would eventually break through the walls of the caucus and claim a settlement at the polls. That was the mischief which this Bill sought to remedy. During the last twenty years several attempts had been made in that House to remedy this matter. Five Bills had been introduced. A Bill for the provision of second ballots was introduced in 1894, and in 1895 the same Bill was reintroduced. This Bill provided for a second ballot to be taken between the two candidates obtaining the highest number of votes where the first of such candidates had not an absolute majority. In 1898 another attempt was made, and he noticed that the Bill was presented by the President of the Board of Trade and the President of the Board of Education; therefore, he asked for their sympathetic consideration of this present attempt. The Bill of 1898 provided for a second election. If the top candidate had not an absolute majority, *all* the candidates had to go to the second poll. He must mention a Bill introduced by the hon. Member for Tyneside last session dealing with transferable votes—a most excellent and useful attempt to alter the existing system. The great objection to the schemes of the previous Bills to which he had just referred, with the notable exception of that of the hon. Member for Tyneside, was that a second election was necessitated with all the turmoil and expense connected therewith. That had always proved a great objection to the adoption of any system of second ballot. The Bill of the hon. Member for Tyneside obviated the second election, but the method adopted therein was not of voting by cross, but of voting by numbers. It would be difficult probably to induce the House to abandon the system of voting by cross, a system which had become rooted in this country, in favour of other systems, however advantageous they might be in theory. The present Bill retained the system of voting by cross and also obviated the necessity of a second election. The mode adopted was exceedingly simple. The voter would be provided with a ballot paper, but such ballot paper would have upon it two copies of the ballot form, one copy headed "First ballot" and the other headed "Second ballot." There would be but one paper, not two papers. When a voter had recorded his vote, exactly as at present, upon that portion of his ballot paper entitled "First ballot" he could, if he desired—the matter was quite optional—vote upon that portion of his paper entitled "Second ballot," for the purpose of indicating which candidate he would desire elected if the candidate for whom he had already voted was unfortunate enough to find himself at the bottom of the poll. This procedure was an exceedingly simple one, and its adoption would in no way place upon the voters any complicated or difficult system of voting. They next came to the count. The procedure here might be a little more difficult but it would be undertaken by experts, and consequently they need have but little fear of difficulties or complications arising. In order to explain matters they would assume an election in a single Member constituency where there were three candidates. They would suppose that the three candidates were Brown, Smith and Robinson—he would not define their politics, but leave hon. Members to do that. When the voting papers were unfolded the count would proceed in exactly the same way as at present, the votes given in the first instance upon that portion of the ballot paper entitled "First ballot" being counted first. The result he would assume to be as follows:—

Brown	- -	3,642
Smith	- -	2,800
Robinson	- -	2,000

It would thus be observed that 8,442 effective votes have been recorded. There would be, of course, a few spoilt papers, but no heed need be taken of them. An absolute majority of those who had effectively voted would be 4,222, that was half, 4,221, plus 1. If Brown had obtained an absolute majority he would be declared elected and there would be an end of the matter, but as would be seen, Brown had not obtained an absolute majority. As a consequence, Robinson would be excluded from the poll under the operation of this Bill. His papers would be examined, and the votes given thereon in the alternative would be added to Brown and Smith, as the case might be. For instance, one voter would have voted for Robinson on his first ballot, and Brown on his second. This would now be counted as a vote for Brown. Another voter would have done quite the opposite, namely, for Robinson in the first instance, and Smith in the second. This would be counted as a vote for Smith. A good many voters would probably not have taken the trouble to fill up their second ballot at all, and these would be treated as blank. Of the 2,000 votes, however, given to Robinson in the first instance, they found that the second ballot gave votes as follows: for Smith, 1,000; for Brown, 500; blank or spoilt, 500. These 1,000 votes added to the original votes given to Smith made his total 3,800, and the 500 votes thus given to Brown with the votes already counted for him make his total 3,142, the final poll therefore being:

Smith	- -	3,800
Brown	- -	3,142

Smith thus being declared elected by a majority over Brown of 658 votes. Under the present system Smith would not have been elected at all, but Brown would have been elected. And if he had been a member of the Tariff Reform League it was presumable that his election would have been treated as a great Tariff Reform victory. It might be said that giving a voter two ballot forms was likely to enhance the number of spoilt papers, but provisions were contained in the Bill to render these chances as remote as possible. Although the procedure, both for voting and counting, was a simple one in practice it was a difficult one to put into legal language, and he would therefore urge hon. Members to forgive any apparent intricacy in the wording of the Bill should the House sanction its introduction. He was not so sanguine as to believe that the Bill would become law this session. He only hoped that before long the House would seriously take into consideration the question of a second ballot. The present was certainly a time when the House should speak the will of the country, and if there were any Members present elected by minorities instead of majorities the usefulness of the House as a means of expressing the popular will would be impaired.

Question, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Ballot Act, 1872, and to provide for the taking of a second ballot at Parliamentary and other elections," put, and agreed to.

Ordered to be brought in by Mr. Edward Dunn, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Rowlands, Mr. Glendinning, Mr. George Nicholls, and Mr. Arthur Richardson.

BALLOT ACT (1872) AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend The Ballot Act, 1872, and to provide for the taking of a second ballot at Parliamentary and other elections," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 265.]

CRIMINAL APPEAL BILL.

Reported, with Amendments, from Standing Committee B.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 238.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 238.]

Bill, as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be taken into consideration upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 264.]

FINANCE BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

Clause 17:—

*MR. CHIOZZA MONEY (Paddington, N.) on a point of order, said the Amendment which he had on the Paper in regard to graduating the income-tax, had been ruled out of order. He respectfully desired to point out that the matter had its origin in the Ways and Means Resolution, that the income-tax should be charged on 16th April, 1907, at the rate of 1s. in the pound. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had taken that rate of income-tax and had modelled and moulded it.

*THE CHAIRMAN said he had ruled the Amendment out of order on the previous night, and had called upon the hon. Member for Windsor. The Amendment had been taken off the White Paper, so he could not now go into the question of his ruling. He called upon the hon. Member for Windsor.

MR. J. F. MASON (Windsor), in proposing an Amendment reducing the income-tax from 1s. to 11d., said his object in moving it was to protest against the view that 1s. income-tax was to be looked upon as part of our fiscal system. He protested on two grounds, first, that the income-tax was the tax on which we had to rely in a case of national emergency; and, secondly, that one-third of the tax was war tax imposed for a temporary reason, and not intended to be permanent. As regarded the first of those grounds, he maintained that the elasticity which the income-tax had in a case of national emergency became of greater importance from the fact that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had told them that he intended to keep the other war taxes permanently. It was quite evident that the great bulk of our indirect taxes had about reached a point at which they would not allow of any material increase. The income-tax was the one tax capable of being increased on short notice with the minimum derangement of the general trade and business of the country, because its effect was less direct than the sudden increase of indirect taxes on articles of consumption. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had told them that the tax was very easy of evasion, and that no doubt was particularly true of two classes of income-tax payers. In the case of small tradesmen there was no doubt a very considerable amount of evasion, owing to their accounts being kept in an imperfect, he might say muddled, fashion. The other class who could easily evade the tax were the very rich people who held large amounts of property in the form of securities. It was very easy indeed for a rich man to avoid a large proportion of his income-tax without in the least putting himself in an illegal position. He did not think it was at all in the interest of the community that he should enter into the details of how that could be done. The fact remained that there were these two classes of evasion. No one would dispute the fact that the higher the tax the greater would be the inducement to evasion. It followed that there must necessarily be a point at which the inducement to evasion would be so great that the loss would counteract the amount of the increased tax. The income-tax at 1s. produced £32,000,000, but it did not follow that a 2s. tax would produce £64,000,000. The point at which evasion would become highly operative was difficult to estimate, but even assuming that a 2s. income-tax would produce £64,000,000 no one would contend that a 3s. or a 4s. tax would produce a proportionately larger sum, and there must be a limit beyond which any further increase would be fruitless. It would be generally agreed that the higher the tax the less room there would be for expansion, and that was of the utmost importance in view of the fact that there was no other tax in our system which was capable of any expansion at all. One-third of the income-tax—namely, 4d. out of a shilling, was imposed as a war tax, and that yielded about £10,000,000. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his Budget statement, said that these war taxes must be maintained so long as the war debt existed. He acknowledged that the argument was good so long as the results of the war tax were applied to the extinction of the war debt. The war debt amounted to about £138,000,000, and the war taxes to about £17,000,000, but out of that sum only £10,000,000 went to reduce the debt, the other £7,000,000 being applied to objects totally different and utterly disconnected from the war itself. Therefore the argument that the war taxes should remain as long as the war debt existed must necessarily break down, and the right hon. Gentleman must see that that was not a good reason to give for the maintenance. At a later stage the right hon. Gentleman said the war taxes must be looked upon more in the nature of permanent taxes because times had changed. It was quite true that times and circumstances had changed. The right hon. gentleman was now Chancellor of the Exchequer, and they had a Radical Government in power, but the point arose as to why these changed times should be put forward as a reason for keeping on war taxes permanently. Some few years ago before the right hon. Gentleman was Chancellor of the Exchequer he held a very strong view regarding the maintenance of these war taxes, for he then seemed to think that under no circumstances ought they to be maintained. In 1903 when the late Government were in power the right hon. Gentleman stated that the war taxes were no part of the permanent fiscal machinery of the country, but were temporary taxes imposed for the purposes of the war, and he assured the House that at the earliest possible moment they would be removed. He further stated that it was the duty of any Chancellor of the Exchequer at once to effect such reductions in the expenditure of the country as would enable him to withdraw with the shortest possible delay what were always intended to be temporary burdens. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had evidently changed his opinion since that time.

MR. ASQUITH: I have not changed my opinion at all.

MR. J. F. MASON said in that case they would have to seek for a reason why the right hon. Gentleman could not now effect what he previously stated was the duty of the Chancellor of the Exchequer of any Government at any time. They would probably find the reason in the fact that the right hon. Gentleman found that in his present position it was not so easy to make such reductions in general expenditure as he thought it to be before he took office. In addition to that, the right hon. Gentleman had probably been affected by considerable pressure from the hon. Gentlemen below the gangway to provide for social legislation of a very expensive nature in the future. Probably the strongest reason of all for the attitude which the right hon. Gentleman had been driven to take up was the fact that he had absolutely made up his mind to adhere to the narrow basis of taxation which, even if maintained for a few more years, would eventually have to be abandoned.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 6, line 31, to leave out the words 'one shilling' and insert the words 'eleven pence.'"—(*Mr. J. F. Mason.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'one shilling' stand part of the clause."

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.) said the hon. Member had stated his case with great temperateness and brevity, and he would endeavour to follow his example. The Amendment he had proposed substituted "eleven pence" for "one shilling," and the first part of his argument as far as he understood it was based upon the assumption that a high income-tax tended to evasion, and therefore, in the long run would defeat the object of the Chancellor of the Exchequer who imposed it. But assuming that to be a sound argument it could not apply to the difference between 1s. and 11d. Did the hon. Member really think that that difference would lead to evasion? If he did not think so, what possible remedy was his Amendment? So far from the rise in the income-tax during the last few years having encouraged evasion it had done nothing of the kind. The yield per penny now with the income-tax at 1s. was substantially greater than it was a few years ago when the tax was 8d.; and even when the tax rose to 1s. 3d. during the war the growth in the yield per penny still went on. They had had some experience of a 2s. income-tax during the Napoleonic war, and one of the most striking circumstances connected with that high tax was that the yield per penny steadily rose and during the last year when that 2s. tax was imposed there was a larger yield than in any previous year.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend) asked whether the increased yield was not due to improved methods of collection and greater stringency?

MR. ASQUITH said that by the improved methods they were only making those pay who ought to pay and thus perform their duty to the State; and that had no doubt tended to improve the yield. What he wished to show was that so far as past experience went even an income-tax raised to such a high figure as 2s. had not in practice led to the evasion referred to by the hon. Member. He quite agreed that there was a point—he did not say what it was and nobody knew what it was—at which the raising of the income-tax would have the unfortunate results to the revenue which the hon. Member very properly deplored, but he could not agree that that consideration had any direct bearing upon a proposal to reduce the income-tax by one penny. The hon. Member had stated that the difference between 8d. and 1s. ought to be regarded as a war tax and treated as such. Undoubtedly it was the case that before the war the income-tax was 8d. and now it was 1s. The war had been over five years, and although during those five years the present Government had only been in office about two years the income-tax remained at the point at which it was left by their predecessors. He adhered to the principle which he laid down in his Budget speech. He had been reminded that he expressed similar views in 1903, and no doubt it was refreshing to hon. Gentlemen opposite to find at least one Member whose opinions did not vary with the quarter of the House in which he sat. His first proposition was that the necessity for the continuance of a war tax did not cease with the discontinuance of hostilities; and his second was that by the reduction of expenditure, and, when they were able to do so by the reduction of expenditure, they should aim at getting back to the state of things that prevailed before the war. Even with the considerable efforts that the present Government had made in the last two years to reduce the Debt there was still an addition to the National Debt, as compared with the state of the Debt before the war, of nearly £140,000,000. Until they had got back to the position which prevailed before the war he did not think they would be in a position to review taxation in the sense in which the hon. Member desired. In the next clause of the Bill he was giving substantial relief to income-tax payers, because he was reducing the tax on earned incomes which did not exceed £2,000 a year from 1s. to 9d. That was a substantial relief to the very class of income-tax payers upon whom the 1s. duty had pressed most heavily. He could not see any prospect of going further than that in the immediate future. He had never laid it down that the income-tax must be permanently maintained at 1s. He had been represented as saying so, although he had denied it a dozen times. He had never said anything of the kind. All he said was that, having regard to the condition of our indebtedness and to the large expenditure of the country, reduced though it had been since the present Government came into office, he could not now assent to the reduction of this tax below 1s.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.) said the right hon. Gentleman congratulated himself and the House on his own consistency. He laid down when in Opposition that the war taxes should cease at the earliest possible moment, but it was only a couple of days ago that he held that certain war taxes should not cease under any circumstances whatever. He had made them permanent taxes instead of annual taxes requiring to be reimposed from year to year.

MR. ASQUITH: That is on their own merits.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said the right hon. Gentleman did not make any distinction as to their own merits when he was in Opposition. The right hon. Gentleman had replied to his hon. friend on the subject of evasion by asking whether anyone supposed that the difference between 1s. and 11d. would make any difference in the desire of the income-taxpayers throughout the country to evade the tax. He did not understand that to be the suggestion which was made. His hon. friend spoke of the income-tax as one of the great reserves for war, and pointed out that the higher it was kept the less it served the purpose of a reserve for war. He was looking forward, as wise men must do, to the time which might possibly occur, though they all hoped it would not, when the country would be exposed to the enormous financial strain which a modern war involved. If they started with the income-tax at 1s., to what point would they have to raise it in order to finance the war? Would they not be forced to raise it to a point at which evasion would become certain? It was no answer to say that during the recent war when great rises in the tax took place the yield per 1d. went on increasing, and equally did he think it was no answer to say that from the days of Mr. Pitt and his successors the produce of the income-tax from the moment it was placed on the present system of collection at the source had shown an increase in the yield per 1d. That was no answer for two reasons. In spite of what the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said, and not in contradiction of it, there was progressive efficiency of collection in the days of Mr. Pitt and his successors, but that efficiency was nothing like the efficiency at the present day. He spoke with the knowledge that these things were hardly capable of proof. In the time of Mr. Pitt and his successors the income-tax was regarded as hateful, and it was owing to the action of a Conservative House of Commons about that time that all records of it were destroyed. If he wanted to show how hateful the tax was to a section of the Liberal Party, he had only to refer to Mr. Gladstone's election manifesto in 1874, when he offered the country the repeal of the income-tax if they again returned him to power. The destruction of the records made it very difficult to say what was done in earlier years. What they could prove was that during the late war there was not an increase of evasion, but an increase of activity on the part of people entitled to secure abatements. That was perfectly legitimate, as no Chancellor of the Exchequer wished to take a tax from people who ought not to be asked to bear the burden. He did not, therefore, make any complaint of people who were entitled to abatements making an effort to secure them, but he said that the very motive which actuated those people to take the trouble to secure abatements which they had never thought it worth while to take before would be effectual in actuating others to see whether, by making new arrangements, they could not avoid paying some portion of the higher tax, and in making others who were not very scrupulous try to avoid it, not only by legitimate means, but possibly by illegitimate means. The fact that the yield per penny went on growing did not show that that motive was not acting concurrently. In the first place, it might be assumed that the work of the country was growing, and that there was a greater amount of wealth on which to levy the tax. In the second place, there was the constant process of transferring private businesses into limited companies, and that enormously aided the accurate collection of income-tax at the source. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, though no doubt right in saying that it was not a penny one way or another that would make a difference in the efforts to evade the tax, had not proved that a considerable rise in the income-tax would not cause a very considerable growth of evasion and avoidance. He could cite in favour of his argument the Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue, who, in giving evidence before the Income-tax Committee, spoke of the danger of evasion and avoidance which would arise if any considerable increase took place in the tax. The question of the penny was to a great extent beside the issue. It was not a question whether or not the normal rate of the tax ought to be at 1s. in time of peace. He was one of those who held that it ought not, one reason being that it left an insufficient reserve in the limit to which it could be carried as a war tax. He thought that in time of peace it was an undue burden on trade. The Chancellor of the Exchequer himself had recognised the claim, as indeed every thoughtful man must, that the income-tax was a burden on trade, and that, in its indirect if not its direct effects, it touched people who were not themselves payers of the tax. It affected the amount of money available for the carrying on of business; it affected the expenditure of a great number of people, and might cause them to limit their expenditure. Indirectly, therefore, the tax had a great effect on wages and employment, and it reacted on the Exchequer, because any limitation of wages and of the activities of trade reacted on the other taxes which the Exchequer received. A high income-tax had a bad effect on the stamp duties and on the Customs and Excise duties. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that he had never laid it down that the normal rate of income-tax should be permanently fixed at a 1s. in the £. No, he did not think the right hon. Gentleman had, but what he had done was to say that he could not afford to sacrifice the revenue from the 1s. tax as at present imposed. Was not that the very same thing as if he had said that he could not see his way to lower the income-tax below 1s.? The right hon. Gentleman had spoken of the great growth of expenditure on the Army and Navy, and concurrently with that the growth of expenditure on education; he had also stated that he would endeavour to persuade the House of Commons to pass a scheme of old-age pensions. He thought that the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman in regard to the income-tax was unsound, and therefore, under the circumstances, he would vote for the Amendment—not that he thought there was any substantial difference between 11d. and 1s., but because he felt that 1s. was too high a rate to maintain.

*Mr. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.) said that the right hon. Gentleman had given the Committee a very interesting exposition of the merits of the income-tax, but had said little in support of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Windsor. He would point out that the right hon. Gentleman the late Chancellor of the Exchequer had not given a fair account of what took place when quoting from the evidence of Sir Henry Primrose. No doubt Sir Henry Primrose said that they could increase the income-tax to such an extent as to lead to evasion. Sir Henry Primrose, however, did not say that that would happen if the tax were fixed at 1s. 3d. or 1s. 6d. in the £; he was only speaking of a super-tax of about 2s. in the £. The late Chancellor of the Exchequer said that when the income-tax had been increased to 1s. 3d. there were many more claims for abatement than when the tax was lower. But these claims were made by people who were entitled by right to abatement, and Sir Henry Primrose did not say that they would evade the increased tax unless it were oppressive in amount. The Committee, in fact, were impressed by the fact of the honesty of the British tax-payer.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN admitted that he had used the words "evasion" and "avoidance," and there was a technical difference between them. Evasion was an illegitimate denial of the tax, and avoidance was a legitimate denial of the imposition of the tax. The hon. Gentleman spoke of avoidance as if it were a refusal to recognise a moral obligation. He did not think there was any moral obligation on the part of any taxpayer to pay more taxes than he was legally liable to pay. There was no question of morality if his income did not come within the limits laid down by law. But, as the Chairman of the Inland Revenue Board had pointed out, there was a great power on the part of rich people to remove their income beyond the limits of the income-tax, in which case there would be no legal liability.

*MR. MCCRAE said he quite agreed as to the distinction which the right hon. Gentleman had made between "evasion" and "avoidance." But he thought that anyone who had gone carefully into the subject would admit that the rich man could not avoid a suggested increase to a very large extent. The evidence went to show that if the rich man evaded or avoided the increased charge on the income-tax he eventually had to pay in one way or another. This was no question, in his opinion, of a war tax. The particular penny between 11d. and 1s. was not in the nature of a war tax. The right hon. Gentleman himself was responsible for it. After the South African War was over the income-tax was reduced by his predecessor; but the right hon. Gentleman when he came into office found that the general expenditure of the county had increased to such an extent that he had to meet it by increasing the income-tax by an extra penny. The right hon. Gentleman had, therefore, the credit or the discredit of putting on an income-tax, not for war purposes, but for ordinary expenditure. He thought that his right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer had shown that he had considered the claims of the income-taxpayers. If the Amendment of the hon. Member for Windsor were carried the income-taxpayer would receive a relief of £2,600,000; but the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not at present prepared to sacrifice that amount, although he was prepared to give relief to the extent of £1,250,000. He hoped that, after the explanation of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, his hon. friend would withdraw his Amendment and allow the Committee to proceed to the much more interesting subject of differentiation raised by the next Amendment.

SIR GILBERT PARKER urged that the income-tax was intolerably high. He pointed out that although the income-tax was suddenly raised after the Crimean War from 7d. to 1s. 2d. and afterwards to 1s. 4d., it was subsequently lowered to 7d. within three years. At that time Mr. Gladstone expressed the opinion that a high income-tax bore very heavily indeed upon the expansion of trade and the general operations of trade, and therefore had an influence on labour and unemployment. Mr. Gladstone admitted that a high income-tax bore more heavily on the direct taxpayer than on the indirect tax-payer, for the reason that it was easier for a person to pay a tax over a considerable number of articles of consumption than to pay it in a lump sum at the end of the year. There was no doubt that our national expenditure had gone on increasing since the income-tax had varied from 2d. to 1s. 4d. in the £. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had not applied the whole of the extra income-tax to the abatement of the war debt, and therefore he insisted that to maintain the tax at 1s. was improper. A shilling income-tax was a very considerable item to people of moderate incomes, and although the Chancellor of the Exchequer was making a concession, Members on that side, and he supposed Members on the other side also, would press the reduction in the hope that another year the right hon. Gentleman would do what past Chancellors of the Exchequer had done in similar circumstances after a great war, and make a reduction of at least 2d. in the £. In view of the circumstances of trade, labour, employment, and wages, which this heavy income tax affected, he strongly supported the Amendment.

* MR. CHIOZZA MONEY said the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had drawn a rather pitiful picture of the small income-tax-payer, but the far larger number of income-taxpayers under the scheme of the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not pay a rate of 1s. or even of 9d. in the £. At the same time, in view of the wording of the Bill and of the form in which they passed this legislation, he could not blame anyone for forgetting that the rate was subject to certain abatements and exemptions. He pleaded with the Chancellor of the Exchequer to make once and for all a clean sweep of the system of affecting to charge a certain rate of income-tax, and afterwards moulding the normal rate, as it was called, into something entirely different. He believed the term "normal" was used by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, but he ventured to question the use of the word in this connection. What was a normal rate? Surely a rate which was submitted to so many subsequent changes that it disappeared in the larger number of cases ought not to be called a normal rate. The better term would be "nominal" or "maximum." He was surprised to find that intelligent persons often were entirely ignorant of the real rate of income-tax they paid. He had talked to a minor official of the British Government who was ignorant of the fact that he paid only a few pence in the £ upon his income. He protested once more against the idea that the income-tax was the war reserve of the country. There was only one war reserve, and that was the income of the British people. That reserve was diminished just as much by a tax on motor cars, which was an income-tax of a capricious nature, as by an income-tax proper. It took money from some people because they indulged in a certain amusement, and it did not take money from other people, who were just as rich, because they indulged in a different amusement. It was the taxable capacity of the British people that had to be considered, and it was a simple thing to show, even if they only had regard to incomes above £160 a year, that the taxable capacity of the people was rising. It was a fortunate thing for the nation and also for the Chancellor of the Exchequer. As a matter of fact, the income-tax of the upper 5,000,000 of people was rising by a sum which could not be less than £30,000,000 per annum. The burden of income-tax on trade had been referred to. Granted that any tax must in some sense be a burden upon the individual, whether he be a trader or otherwise, it could not be urged that traders in this country were subject to a greater burden than those in Germany. Not only was the big trader in Germany subject to a State income-tax of 1s., but he had to pay also a civic income-tax, which in many towns amounted to 1s. 3d. or 1s. 6d. in the £. Such a man in one of our towns would merely have to pay a rate which would be assessed on the rental value of his house, and would probably not amount to more than £60 to £80 per annum. When they compared that with the man in Germany who had to contribute for civic purposes from £200 to £400 per annum, it would be seen that the position of the trader in this country, so far from being worse than the position of the trader in Germany, was certainly more favourable in point of taxation. The right hon. Gentleman opposite raised the income-tax by 1d. in time of peace, but the present Chancellor of the Exchequer had lowered, also in time of peace, the maximum rate by 3d. for a large number of income-tax payers, and yet he was assailed as if he were a sinner in this matter.

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS (Sheffield, Ecclesall) said he would like to make a final appeal to the Chancellor of the Exchequer with regard to the income-tax, and to give the right hon. Gentleman an opportunity of replying to the extraordinary remark made yesterday in Committee by the President of the Board of Education, who said he was in favour of abolishing all indirect taxation. Was he aware that if that position was taken up the income-tax and death duties would have to be trebled to meet the deficiency? He could not think the Chancellor of the Exchequer wished to associate himself with that view, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would satisfy the Committee on the point. He appealed to the right hon. Gentleman on three grounds. In the first place he and his predecessors had promised the country from time to time that the income-taxpayer should receive relief in the first instance. The late Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1904, when he had to raise the tax from 11d. to 1s., said that in his opinion the income-taxpayer would have the first claim to relief, and that he hoped the sacrifice he was then asking of him would not endure for long. It had endured for three years, and the present Chancellor of the Exchequer when he made his Budget statement last year associated himself with the remark of his predecessor that a uniform rate of 1s. in the £ in time of peace was impossible to justify and difficult to collect. The right hon. Gentleman said he did not regard an income-tax of a shilling as permanent. If that were so, could he give income-taxpayers some hope that when he made his next Budget statement, if the present Government were in office another year, he would take their claim seriously into consideration? His second point was that the direct taxes were a burden upon the trade and industry of the country, affecting not only profits but ultimately the wage-earners. The Chancellor of the Exchequer himself had admitted this. Thirdly, the income-tax was the great reserve in time of emergency. The hon. Member for North Paddington had said that the reserve fund was the income of the country, but in practice the reserve fund was twofold, consisting as it did in the suspension of the Sinking Fund and the imposition of the income-tax. On the three grounds he had mentioned he appealed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to reconsider his decision with reference to the shilling income-tax. If he would not grant any reduction this year, would he give some hope to income-taxpayers, who had borne this burden for a long time with patience and in a patriotic spirit, that he would consider their claims on the next occasion?

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH (Derbyshire, W.) said the impression he gathered on the Income-tax Committee was that there were a number of means available for people to avoid the income tax which were not generally known, but that if a heavy and abnormal income-tax was to become a permanent part of our fiscal system, avoidance would be much more resorted to in the future than at the present moment. He was perfectly prepared to accept literally, and in the sense in which he believed he meant it, the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that it was not his wish to make a shilling income-tax an integral and permanent part of our fiscal system. A deliberate statement was made yesterday by the right hon. Gentleman that the increased duties put for war purposes on tobacco, beer, and spirits were to remain at any rate at the figure at which they now stood, and possibly some of them might be increased. With the obligations now resting upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the demands which were bound to be made upon him in the future, was there any reasonable hope that the income-tax of 1s. in the £ would be reduced by a single penny during the existence of the present Government? He felt sure that the somewhat startling disclosure of the state of mind of the Minister for Education was but an unguarded expression of opinion, and did not represent the policy of the Government; and he was glad that the suggestions of the hon. Member for North Paddington did not meet with acceptance from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The hon. Member had endeavoured to combat the statement that one of the objections to a high income-tax was the need of a war reserve. When they talked of the tax as a war reserve they meant that we should have a tax for which all the machinery was available, and which tax being low in time of peace could be put on rapidly in war time with as little dislocation as possible. It was understood that the Budget for the year was one of a series, and was framed, not for the purposes of the year only, but with a view to enabling the right hon. Gentleman to meet future demands. But he objected to the holding back of relief to income-taxpayers for some ulterior purpose. It was not as though means would not be available in future years by which the right hon. Gentleman could find funds for his purposes, and they were entitled to make their protest by supporting this Amendment.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said that hon. Gentlemen opposite did not appear to appreciate fully the financial position. They had to consider on what taxes relief should be given when relief was possible. The mover of the Amendment founded his argument on two grounds—that the high rate of the tax led to evasions, and that the addition was a war tax and should be removed in time of peace. The first of these had been dealt with by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he would only remind the Committee that experience in the last few years had not shown that evasions increased with the increase of the tax. The reduction to 11d. would not have any effect on the evasion difficulty. It was said that the tax had been made much more productive of late years because of the conversion of private firms into limited companies. But that was an effect which was experienced during only two or three years. The income-tax return had increased, and they were satisfied that the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman would in no sense affect the question of evasion, and they would get just as much at a shilling as they would get at 11d. It was also argued that this penny ought to be taken off because it had been put on for war purposes; but this was an entire fallacy as regarded the penny. During the war something like £33,000,000 of taxation was imposed, and it was mostly described as for war purposes, but as a matter of fact it was not all applied to war purposes, some of it going to meet increased expenditure. In the year following the war, Mr. Ritchie took off £12,000,000, having a greatly improved revenue and the expenditure being reduced, but his successor had found it necessary again to put on the penny which had been taken off the income-tax. He, therefore, did not think that it could be claimed that this particular penny could be regarded as having been put on for war purposes. In regard to the whole question of the war expenditure, while it was true that the income-tax was increased nominally for war purposes, at the same time the taxes on articles of consumption —tea, corn, sugar, and other articles— were also increased. While income-tax had been relieved of 3d., the corn duty had gone, and the tea duty had been reduced by a penny. ["Coal."] He had not mentioned coal, because it was denied on the other side of the House that it was indirect taxation. In regard to indirect taxation there had been some relief, while the income-taxpayer was still suffering, not from the war expenditure but from the extravagance in expenditure of the late Government, which raised the ordinary expenditure of the country from £90,000,000 to £140,000,000. While the income-tax had had some relief since the war, and while indirect taxation had also had some relief, there still remained a lot of heavy burdens on both classes of taxation. What alternative was offered to the proposal of the Government? The Amendment proposed that his right hon. friend should lose over £2,500,000, but no means had been suggested of filling that void. The hon. Member for Gravesend had suggested a tax on corn and meat, but that would involve a change of our fiscal system, and that question had been settled and disposed of by the House. The Committee well knew that his right hon. friend, looking to the future and the schemes he had in hand, had not the money available to meet demands for a reduction of taxation. He for one would like to see the income-tax and other taxes reduced, but taxation was an evil which the country must accept; and much as he would like to see a reduction of taxes, he certainly would not support the reduction of the income-tax if it was to be accompanied by an increase of the taxes on articles of consumption.

*MR. H. H. MARKS (Kent, Thanet) said he should certainly support the Amendment of his hon. friend. They had heard that afternoon the affirmation by the right hon. Gentleman of his opinion that the taxes which had been described as war taxes should be the first to be repealed or reduced; and they had heard from him, whatever they might have heard from other authorities, that 4d. of the existing income-tax was by him regarded as war tax. It was true, as the right hon. Gentleman had pointed out, that the late Government had not reduced this particular war tax; but they had not had the advantages and the opportunities which had fallen to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the fact that they had not had those advantages and opportunities might possibly be deemed an explanation of their failure to reduce the income-tax. But in addition to that the war had only ended two years during the time they were in office, and two years had elapsed since then The right hon. Gentleman had said that he could hold out no hope, either now or hereafter, of going further than he was going at present; but he had left them to understand that it was not that he was not willing to do it, but that it was not in his power. He would venture to remind him that the amount which had been lost to the Exchequer by the repeal of the export duty on coal would have more than sufficed to allow of this 1d. reduction in the income-tax. Might he further remind the right hon. Gentleman that the export duty on coal was repealed at the time when it was steadily increasing its return without any burden on the general interests of the country? But even if they had not had the export duty on coal to rely upon, the right hon. Gentleman might by a little prevision have provided by this time a very substantial part of the amount which was asked for reduction of the income-tax. If it had occurred to him a year ago to do as he had done this year, and if he might say so, speaking for himself personally, what he thought the right hon. Gentleman had wisely done this year, namely, increased the death duties, he would have had enough by this time for a reduction of the income-tax. It was true, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said, that he had made some remission in regard to a certain class of incomes, a very indefinite and as yet undetermined class of incomes, which were to have a rebate of 3d. in the £. But the 1s. income-tax was a burden on the trade of the country and was a danger to the wages received in the country. The remission now proposed would not affect the large employers of labour, and, therefore, would not influence the question of wages. A reduction of income-tax which would affect the general business of the community, benefit the large employers of labour, and in that way ultimately affect wages also, would be of substantial benefit, and it was such a benefit as was proposed by the Amendment of his hon. friend.

*MR. GEORGE D. FABER (York) said the Postmaster-General had pointed out that if the Amendment were carried it would be necessary to provide for £2,500,000, and that the Chancellor of the Exchequer could not find any source from which he could provide for that amount. Hon. Members on his side had been asked to reply to that. He had his own answer ready. It could be done by indulging in a small, an almost infinitesimal, measure of fiscal reform. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer could get over the fundamental objection which he had to any operation of the kind, he would find that many of his difficulties would melt away as by the stroke of the enchanter's wand. The right hon. Gentleman had told them that the income-tax was to be regarded as an integral portion of the fiscal system. He supposed they were all aware of this, although no Chancellor of the Exchequer had ever said it in terms before. The Chancellor had also stated that it must be his duty to budget, not for one year only, but for several years; and there again he did not believe any Chancellor of the Exchequer had ever given utterance to such a proposition before. Most Chancellors had considered that sufficient for the year was the Budget thereof. There was no doubt, however, that it was this statement of the Chancellor's which had caused many Members to think that 1s. income-tax was intended to be permanent, but the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not said that; he had only said that it was the duty of a Chancellor to budget for several years, and that the 1s. must be the income-tax for the series. The right hon. Gentleman had further stated that the war taxes did not come to an end when the war was over. He agreed, but there again no Chancellor of the Exchequer had ever before laid down such a proposition. He believed that after the Crimean War all the great statesmen and economists of that time took the view that the end of the war should end the extra financial burdens imposed upon the people. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had founded the whole of his financial policy upon the assumption that the war taxes must continue until the whole of the £130,000,000 war debt was paid off. The direct war taxation of 4d. in the £ on the income-tax represented £10,000,000, and the indirect war taxes produced another £10,000,000, or £20,000,000 in all of war taxation. Surely the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to apply the whole of that £20,000,000 to reducing the war debt. But he was doing nothing of the kind.

*THE CHAIRMAN: The reduction of the national debt hardly arises on this Amendment.

*MR. GEORGE D. FABER said the 1s. income-tax was directly connected with it, because 4d. of it was alleged to be kept on in order to pay off some of the war debt, but the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not doing this.

MR. ASQUITH said this was not a question of a war tax at all. They were discussing now the difference between 11d. and 1s. The tax was reduced to 11d. after the war, and then another 1d. was put on after the war for peace purposes.

*MR. GEORGE D. FABER said the right hon. Gentleman stated in his Budget speech that so long as the extra war burdens remained the claim of a war tax to be removed was, in his opinion, inadmissible.

MR. ASQUITH said that during the war the income-tax was raised from 8d. to 1s. 3d. Certainly 3d. of the present tax was a war tax, but that argument did not apply to the present Amendment.

*MR. GEORGE D. FABER said the Chancellor of the Exchequer stated definitely in his Budget speech that he would not remove the £20,000,000 of war taxes until the £130,000,000 of war debt had been paid off.

MR. EVANS (Glamorganshire, Mid.) said he wished to call attention to the most extraordinary decision recently given in the House of Lords, which decided a point that nobody had thought of since 1854. The House of Lords had just decided that all sewers vested in public authorities were assessable to the income-tax. Under the recent decision every sewer in the country was now assessable to income-tax unless the law was changed. The effect of that would be that whereas now exemption was being given to all small incomes under £160, if sewers were assessed it followed that a good many smaller ratepayers would be assessed. [AN HON. MEMBER: "Is this in order?"] He thought it was quite in order, because if all sewers were assessed they could reduce the income-tax from 1s. to 11d.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, on a point of order, said the subject the hon. Member was raising was very important and must be discussed at some time or other; but he wished to know whether they were entitled to discuss subjects of this kind upon an Amendment to reduce the income-tax from 1s. to 11d.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. Member is raising a subject which ought to be discussed on the question that the clause stand part of the Bill.

MR. EVANS said he would of course bow to the Chairman's ruling, although it would necessitate his repeating some of his remarks later on.

*MR. GEORGE D. FABER (in continuation of his speech) said his argument was that the income-tax as it now remained at 1s. was a war tax, and he founded his argument upon that fact. If, however, the right hon. Gentleman assured him that the income-tax did not fall within the war taxes, of course his argument fell to the ground. If, on the other hand, it was held that the income-tax was one of the war taxes, then his remarks were entirely in order. He thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer had come to an insufficient conclusion on his premises, because he had contended that these war taxes of £20,000,000, most of which consisted of the income-tax at 1s. in the £, were levied for the purpose of paying off war debt, but as a matter of fact he was not doing that. All he paid off last year on this score was £500,000 and all he proposed to pay off this year was £1,500,000, whereas the whole of the £20,000,000 should have been applied to this purpose, in each year.

*THE CHAIRMAN: Really the hon. Member's remarks are not in order on this Amendment. They are more appropriate to a later clause.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 265; Noes, 95. (Division List No. 265.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Alden, Percy
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barlow, Sir John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnes, G. N.
Barry, Redmond J. (Tyrone, N.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beck, A. Cecil
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S. Geo.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bethell, Sir J. H. (Essex, Romf'rd
Billson, Sir Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W.
Boulton, A. C. F.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Brooke, Stopford
Bryce, J. Annan
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Clough, William
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew, W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras, W
Cooper, G. J.
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Crombie, John William
Crosfield, A. H.
Davies, David (Montgomery Co.
Davies, Ellis William (Eifion)
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dewar, Sir J. A. (Inverness-sh.)
Dickinson, W. H. (St. Pancras, N.
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobson, Thomas W.
Duckworth, James
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. Martin (Walsall)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Sir Francis (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Essex, R. W.
Evans, Samuel T.
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hall, Frederick
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harvey, W. E. (Derbyshire, N.E.
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Col. Sir Ivor (Mon., S.)
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Holt, Richard Durning
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hope, W. Bateman (Somerset, N.
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Jacoby, Sir James Alfred
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonad, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J. M. (Falkirk B'ghs
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Mallet, Charles E.
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alport
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. G.
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Charles N. (Doncast'r
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
Parker, James (Halifax)
Pearce, Robert (Staffs, Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, E.)
Pullar, Sir Robert
Radford, G. H.
Rees, J. D.
Renton, Major Leslie
Richardson, A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E. (Dundee)
Robertson, Sir G. Scott (Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann, Sir C. E. (Manchester)
Scott, A. H. (Ashton-under-Lyne
Seaverns, J. H.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shipman, Dr. John G.

Silcock, Thomas Ball
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley,Hn.A.Lyulph(Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas,Abel(Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas,SirA.(Glamorgan,E.)
Thomas,DavidAlfred(Merthyr
Thomasson, Franklin
Thompson,J.W.H.(Somerset,E.
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Wadsworth, J.
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walters, John Tudor
Walton,SirJohnL.(Leeds, S.)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Waring, Walter
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason,Eugene(Clackmannan)
Wason,JohnCathcart(Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, Henry A.
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whiteley,JohnHenry (Halifax)
Wiles, Thomas
Willams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williamson, A
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson,Hon.C.H.W.(Hull,W.)
Wilson,HenryJ.(York,W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson,J.W.(Worcestersh.N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras,S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wood, T. M'Kinnon

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Acland-Hood,Rt.Hn.SirAlexF
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Ashley, W. W.
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt.Hon.SirH.
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour,RtHn.A.J.(CityLond.)
Banbury,SirFrederick George
Barrie, H. T. (LondonderryN.
Beach,Hn.MichaelHughHicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, Sir William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cavendish,Rt.Hon.VictorC.W.
Cecil,Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil,Lord R. (Marylebone,E.)
Chamberlain,RtHnJ.A.(Worc.
Coates,E.Feetham (Lewisham)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H.A.E.
Collings,Rt.Hn.J.(Birmingh'm
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig,CharlesCurtis(Antrim,S.
Craig,CaptainJames(Down,E.)
Craik, Sir Henry
Dalrymple, Viscount
Dixon-Hartland,SirFredDixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duncan,Robert(Lanark,Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Faber, Capt. W. V. (Hants, W.)
Fell, Arthur
Fletcher, J. S.
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Gordon, J.
Haddock, George R.
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Helmsley, Viscount
Hervey,F.W.F.(BuryS.Edm'ds
Hill,SirClement(Shrewsbury)
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt,Rowland
Kennaway,Rt.Hon.SirJohnH.
Kenyon-Slaney,Rt.Hon.Col.W.
King,SirHenrySeymour(Hull)
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Lee,ArthurH.(Hants.,Fareham
Liddell, Henry
Lockwood,Rt.Hn.Lt.-Col.A.R.
Long,Rt.Hn.Walter(Dublin,S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Marks, H. H. (Kent)
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Moore, William
Morpeth, Viscount
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Nield, Herbert
O'Neil,Hon.Robert Torrens
Parker,SirGilbert(Gravesend)
Percy, Earl
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Ratcliff, Major R. F.
Ronaldshay, Earl of
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sheffield,SirBerkeleyGeorgeD.
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith,AbelH.(Hertford,East)
Smith,F.E.(Liverpool, Walton)
Starkey, John R.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Thomson,W.Mitchell-(Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.
Valentia, Viscount
Walker,Col.W.H.(Lancashire)
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson,A.Stanley(York,E.R.)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt.Hon.C.B.Stuart-
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. James Mason and Mr. Samuel Roberts.

*MR. ANNAN BRYCE (Inverness Burghs) moved to insert at the end of Sub-section (2) words to provide that, in the case of companies with limited liability registered under the Companies Acts, income-tax should be charged on the amount distributed as dividend. He said the subject to which he wished to direct the attention of the Committee was one mentioned last year in the course of the Second-Reading debate on the Finance Bill. The Chancellor of the Exchequer at that time expressed certain sympathy with the idea embodied in this Amendment. Income-tax, theoretically, was chargeable upon net profits, but in the case of a great many companies the present method of assessment bore with extreme hardship, because instead of being charged on the net profits it was charged upon imaginary profits which were the result of arbitration by the Inland Revenue itself. In this Amendment he proposed that the method of assessment on limited companies should be by a charge on the dividends paid to their shareholders. He could give a good many illustrations of the unfair way in which the present method of assessment bore upon certain companies. He would take the case of a petroleum company. It started by spending a certain amount of money on wells and machinery. It afterwards found that these wells ceased to give the amount of oil they gave at the beginning, and the company consequently had to spend out of its profits—unless they raised fresh capital—the money required to dig new wells, and the result was that in a great many cases they had to pay double or three times what they really ought to pay if the tax were levied upon their net profits. He knew a company which had only been in existence for a few years. That company had paid £39,000 in dividends, and if it had been assessed on the dividends at the rate of 1s. or 1s. 2d.—the rates in operation at the time when the dividends were paid—it would have paid only £2,000 in income-tax, whereas as a matter of fact it had paid no less than £5,500. At the same time it had lost half of its capital and had written off a large sum for depreciation and renewals. He knew another case where a company had paid £1,000 income-tax in the course of a few years, though it had never paid any dividend at all, and its capital account at present showed a debit balance. But it was really not necessary to elaborate this, because the Chancellor of the Exchequer was aware of the nature of the hardship. The Income-tax Commissioners would not suffer in the long run if they permitted the change now proposed to be carried out, because if a company only paid income-tax on net profit it would thereby become every year more solid, its life would be longer, and so the Inland Revenue would in the long run benefit. In some countries this principle had been recognised. In Belgium, for instance, income-tax was paid only on the dividends distributed to shareholders. In regard to mining companies generally in Australia and New Zealand the same principle was recognised. In New Zealand the mining companies were charged income-tax upon dividends, and not upon an arbitrary determination of what the net profits were, and besides that they were allowed to make large reductions for depreciation and renewals. One objection to his proposal was that it was supposed there might be a danger to the Inland Revenue in allowing reserves to be piled up through the non-payment of dividends, but he would point out that that could not be done beyond a certain point. Moreover, it was perfectly simple to provide that if any company was liquidated for the purpose of distributing its reserves income-tax could be charged on the amounts put from time to time to reserve. He trusted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would see his way to make the change which he had suggested, and so give some relief in the cases that he had mentioned.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 6, line 35, at the end, to insert the words "Provided that, in the case of companies with limited liability registered under the Companies' Acts, income-tax shall be charged on the amount distributed as dividend.' "—(*Mr. Annan Bryce.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. McKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.) said that his hon. friend had stated that certain companies did not always divide their profits in dividends each year, but sometimes distributed them over a series of years. Not long ago they had heard of public companies subscribing out of reserve to the Municipal Reform League. As a matter of fact, the proposal of his hon. friend would work very unfairly, because the profits of one year might be reserved for the purpose of equalising dividends in future years, and the operation of the Amendment of his hon. friend would in certain cases be to increase the charge on the taxpayers of the country. The tax should be levied on the profits of the year in which they were made. The real fact was that under the present law companies, like individuals, were taxed upon the profits which they had made during the current year, and that principle ought to be applied all round. The law took no cognisance of the particular purpose to which the profits were devoted; and the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman would introduce a change in dealing with a company as distinguished from an individual.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that the right hon. Gentleman had said that there was no reason why they should afford to a company a right which was not conceded to a private individual. But he had a good deal of sympathy with the intention of the hon. Gentleman who had moved the Amendment, although he admitted that the subject was very difficult to deal with. It would have a bad effect on the financial Budget of the year, but he did not see why it should be unjust to the State in the long run. Let them take the case of a capitalist who had paid a large sum of money for a patent right which was to run for fourteen years. He would not consider that he had earned any profit until after he had paid off the money which he had expended in securing the patent right, although he had made considerable profits in the meantime. For his part he would be glad if the right hon. Gentleman was able to meet such a case, and he did not think that he would lose revenue in the long run.

Sir F. BANBURY (City of London) did not think that the right hon. Gentleman had met the case presented by the hon. Member for Inverness Burghs as to the equalisation of dividends. The shareholders would not allow any large sum to be set aside for that purpose or to be paid out of reserve for any other purpose. It seemed to him ridiculous that the same rule should apply to public companies as to private individuals. He instanced the case of the Nitrate Company; the capital was £1,000,000. The gross revenue for the last seven years was £1,097,574, and allowing 5 per cent. for depreciation of machinery, £33,721, the seven years' assessment for income-tax would be £1,063,853. But that company was a wasting company. The depreciation fund for exhaustion of raw material as the grounds were worked out and depreciation of buildings, etc., would amount to £457,479. The amount available for dividend would be £606,374 and on that income-tax ought to be charged, instead of on the £1,063,853 on which it had been charged. The shareholders had thus been taxed on profits to the extent of £457,459 which they had never seen and which they never would except in the fact that the capital had been maintained on which they would have to pay death duties. When he presented this case to the Chancellor of the Exchequer all the reply that the right hon. Gentleman made was that it had been the custom for sixty years to make this charge to the income-tax, and he considered that that was a sufficient answer. He quite admitted the difficulty which the right hon. Gentleman had to encounter, but there was substance in the Amendment of the hon. Member for the Inverness Burghs, and if it had been the practice for sixty years it was the duty of the House of Commons to put it right.

Sir E. CARSON (Dublin University) said that when he was Solicitor-General he had a great deal to do with the administration of the Income-tax Act, and he could assure the Committee that it was exceedingly difficult to collect that tax on the basis of income earned and income derived from investments. Of course, it was very easy to say that there was something attractive in the Amendment brought forward by the hon. Member for Inverness Burghs. To take the case which was put by his hon. friend of a wasting security, why should not that nitrate company be charged income-tax? He, as a private individual, was charged in respect of the house of which he had purchased the lease and that lease ran out year by year until at the end nothing was left. As a prudent man he might put by so much each year to provide for that, but if the company was given this concession that concession must also be given to him. Or they might take the case of a hard working man like himself, whose capital was his health and his length of life. As a prudent man he must put by something every year because he might not be able always to make an income. Was he to pay upon that and the company go free? If they once departed from the sound principle laid down by the Income-tax Acts and examined what was done by the profits he believed they would raise such a confusion that it would be impossible to allay it. He thought they ought to allow certain deductions. He thought the deductions were rather narrow, and, what was more, he believed they were laid down at a time when business was carried on under different conditions and that there were many things which might be allowed as legitimate outgoings which were not allowed now. He thought they might extend the deductions, but however attractive the Amendment might seem he did not think it would be possible to carry it into effect.

MR. ASQUITH said his right hon. friend had answered far more ably than he was able to the argument of the hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London. The real truth was that when they began to deal with these wasting securities they found themselves drawn into inextricable confusion. He quite agreed that the case stated was a one of apparent hardship at first sight, but the hardship, as his right hon. friend had pointed out, came on at an earlier stage, at the stage of the ascertainment of what was profit. This question, if it was raised at all, ought to be raised on a proposal to amend the rules of the Income-tax Acts, as to what ought or ought not to be allowed in determining income. It was, he thought, foreign to this Amendment and foreign to this clause. But once they had determined what the profits of a business were, and they should determine that on rules which were uniform, for income-tax purposes it was quite irrelevant to inquire as to what was done with them. What was done with them depended entirely on the will or caprice of the person who made them, and for income-tax proposes it did not matter what he did with them. As his right hon. friend stated they could not discriminate between a company and an individual. On these grounds it was impossible for him to accept the Amendment.

MR. FELL (Great Yarmouth) said he wished to raise a point which he could best explain by giving a concrete case. He believed he would have the sympathy of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the matter. Supposing a company made a profit of, say, £100,000, but did not divide that money amongst the shareholders, employing it instead to write down losses incurred in business. If that £100,000 had been distributed among the shareholders as profits, the smaller shareholders would be entitled to recover that portion of the income-tax accruing to them by way of abatement. But the company being assessed on the whole amount at 1s. in the £, there was no possibility of the shareholders ever getting back that portion of their abatement. He thought some remedy for this might be found in the Amendment. It was a distinct hardship on these people that they should not get the abatement to which they were entitled.

SIR F. BANBURY said he would just point out in reply to the right hon. Gentleman that depreciation was already allowed to the extent of 5 per cent., and if that deduction was allowed there could be no reason why the property tax should not be deducted. When once the principle was admitted that under certain conditions deductions could be allowed for depreciation, it must be also admitted that in some cases the depreciation might be larger than in others and that larger deductions must be allowed. He could not see that the argument of his right hon. and learned friend of the man with a house had any relevancy to this point, and he certainly hoped the right hon. Gentleman would consider next year whether or not he could increase the amount allowed for depreciation.

*MR. ANNAN BRYCE said he would be perfectly willing to accept the suggestion of the hon. Member for the City of London. If the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would consent to that it would meet his view. He quite appreciated the difficulty of making a distinction between companies and individuals. But having in view the fact that it was done in other countries he failed to see why it should not be done here. What he wanted to emphasise was the hardship inflicted on a great number of shareholders in companies with a diminishing capital. He happened to know that the Income-tax Commissioners deplored the fact that they were at the present time so tied by the rules that they were not able to do as they would like to do in these matters. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would consider this matter next year. He begged to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

*Mr. CHIOZZA MONEY trusted he would be forgiven for speaking again on this particular clause, but his reason for so doing was that the issue involved was so very great. He referred to the issue of a graduated income-tax. He had himself prepared, at some trouble, an Amendment with reference to a graduated income-tax which had been ruled out of order, but had it been adopted it would have brought in another £6,000,000 to the Exchequer. It was not so much, however, on the ground of gaining additional revenue, although that was an exceedingly important point in this connection, that he desired to raise the subject, as on the ground that more justice needed to be done between the various orders of income-taxpayers. No matter what amount the Chancellor of the Exchequer desired to raise, whether it was £32,500,000 as in the present year, or £20,000,000, or £50,000,000, regard should be had to the means possessed by the various classes of the income-taxpayers. The present rough system of graduation as left by the Conservative Government some years ago was effected by a series of abatements, and they were so crude that he doubted whether any hon. Member could write down a rough idea of the graduation arrived at. Under that system nobody knew exactly where he was, and no man could say without inquiry and calculation what amount of income-tax was paid by the lower class of income-taxpayers. A man who under the present system of abatements only paid a few pence in the £ was under the impression that he paid a large amount of income-tax. And that fact was impressed upon his mind because of the Party capital made by both sides, and also by newspapers, out of this tax. There was no more popular appeal to the public than to tell them that the Government in power was taxing them very heavily. That was the reason that the small income-taxpayer laboured under the impression that he was more oppressed than any other class. But while the impression of hardship was exaggerated, there was undoubtedly too rapid a rise in the scale at the lower end. Between the figures of £250 and £300 a year lay hundreds of thousands of income-taxpayers who depended entirely on their health for their incomes. If inquiries were made into the position of the lower middle class, it would be found that the position of many of them in society was exceedingly insecure and that they were subject to terms of unemployment quite as serious as those which were suffered by the labouring classes. He held that considerable relief could be given to this class by a proper system of graduation. The principle of graduation had been gradually admitted, not only by statesmen, but academic economists. It was not so long ago that he heard Professor Marshall say that a graduated income-tax was the ideal form of taxation. What had stood in the way was the want of knowledge of the taxable incomes. It was impossible to give proper graduation unless there was some idea of the different incomes of the different taxpayers. That was a very strong argument indeed for taking measures to ascertain the actual income of the income-taxpayer. How did the matter stand? Until this Budget was framed the position was that two-thirds or three-fourths of the income-taxpayers were called upon to declare their income. His right hon. friend, by introducing a new step in graduation, would now ascertain the individual incomes of some 950,000 out of 1,100,000 taxpayers. It was argued that because the abatement, like the differentiation, was something in which there was an advantage to the taxpayer, therefore the taxpayer made the declaration in the hope of getting something, and that it was a very powerful engine for obtaining a declaration from that class. But that argument fell to the ground for the reason that in a large number of cases the income-taxpayer did not declare his income in order to obtain an abatement, but had it declared for him by a third person, his employer.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. RUNCIMAN, Dewsbury): Is all the income declared by the employer or the amount paid by the employer?

MR. CHIOZZA MONEY said that in nineteen cases out of twenty, in the case of clerks and travellers and income-taxpayers of that description, the amount declared by the employer was the entire income of the taxpayer. That was inquisition with a vengeance, for we actually made inquiry not from the poor man but from the poor man's employer. Yet the employer himself had not to declare his entire income. To pass to the other end of the scale, such rich men as made their incomes entirely from their own business now declared their entire income under Schedule D, and he failed to see why there should be any difference in the inquisition between the man who gained his sole income from his trade and the man who derived his income from a number of rents and investments and who had not to make under our present system any return whatever. The next point that had been urged against graduation of income-tax was that it was not practicable, but there had not been much heard of that argument since the appointment of the Income-tax Committee. If it was thought advisable to graduate only small and moderate incomes then the Committee declared that it was practicable to do so by "degression." If it was thought advisable to graduate the income-tax to obtain higher revenue, then it was possible, the Committee declared, to use the method of a super tax. He did not favour a super tax in the form of arranging a second tax to clap on top of the existing tax. He thought, rather, that the arrangement should be in the form of a plain and simple scale rising from the lower incomes to the highest. The scale could be symmetrically arranged in a way that would appeal to the common sense of the income-taxpayers. If that were done—and the same system was already in existence in the world—he was perfectly sure that the income-tax would be placed on a much more equitable basis than at present, and it would be popularised so far as it was possible to popularise any tax whatever. The idea of justice would attach to it which did not attach to it now. But it was said that even if a scale were arranged it would not be worth doing, because there was not a great deal to be got from it. He doubted that. There could be no doubt that the net income of the income-taxpaying classes in the present year would not be less than £800,000,000. If they made allowance for non-personal incomes, they would have not much under £750,000,000 net as the income of the tax-paying classes taxable under a graduated scale. He regarded that as a most conservative estimate. What could they do to obtain increased revenue from such an income as that? Could they do it without injuring the trade of the country and without trenching upon capital savings, to which, in the present order of society, they must have regard? Of the £750,000,000 roughly about £250,000,000 represented incomes below £700 a year, and £500,000,000 the incomes over £700 a year. Looking to the expenditure of the rich, the extraordinary development of luxuries and of the trades which ministered to those luxuries, it was not surprising that statistical inquiries showed that of the £500,000,000 probably £200,000,000 was the aggregate of incomes over £5,000 a year. That deduction did not surprise them in view of the condition of society, as they knew it to-day. If they assumed that there was an income of £250,000,000 up to £700, £300,000,000 between £700 and £5,000, and £200,000,000 over £5,000, then it was a simple matter to show that by an income-tax graduated not above 1s. 6d. in the pound they could produce an income larger than would be produced by the scheme of his right hon. friend, certainly not smaller. They could further show that by a tax which did not exceed 2s. in the pound at the highest point and which only averaged 6½ per cent. they could easily raise a sum of over £50,000,000 if they required it. He urged that these considerations should have weight with the Chancellor of the Exchequer in framing his Budget. Another argument advanced was that the trouble involved was too great. He could not admit that for a single moment. After all, the total number of assessments did not exceed 1,100,000. It was easy to name a country where they had to deal with 3,500,000 assessments in a single year. If in a foreign country that number could be successfully dealt with, and a practical plan of graduation carried out, reaching up to £5,000 a year, why should not this country be able to deal with a scheme of graduation with only 1,100,000 assessments? The argument about trouble, at least, ought not to be used. The House was now sitting as a single Chamber, for they were treating of matters with regard to which there was no House of Lords. There was nothing which stood between his right hon. friend and the prosecution of his financial proposals. If it was the case that a very large number of social measures were simply at a standstill for want of ways and means, and when they had Members on the other side continually preaching that they had a method of raising revenue—

*THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order. The hon. Gentleman is allowing himself great latitude.

*MR. CHIOZZA MONEY said he at once bowed to the Chairman's ruling, but he would conclude by observing that at any rate there was an opportunity for dealing with this matter which could not be frustrated, and he trusted, therefore, that the considerations which he had ventured to urge would receive careful attention.

MR. EVANS hoped that the answer to be made to his hon. friend on this occasion would not close the door against the proposal for graduation of the income-tax. But he felt that it came rather late, though it had been discussed in the Budget debate, and also on the Second Reading of the Bill. He was not quite sure what the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said in those debates, but he trusted that nothing he said now would make it difficult for him to travel along this road and to carry out the recommendations of the Committee, which, appointed by him last session, had reported unanimously in favour of graduation. He desired to call the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to one other small matter. This clause, and the income-tax which it authorised, would touch, according to the recent decision of the House of Lords, a species of property which had never been touched before. Since the Act of 1853 was passed it had never dawned on anybody until last year, when it occurred to someone living in the Celtic fringe between Monmouthshire and Glamorgan, that the income-tax should be levied on the public property of local authorities, which they were bound by Act of Parliament to provide. He did not think the decision was necessarily confined to a sewer vesting in a public authority, as liable to income-tax. It was a most extraordinary decision. He would call attention to one phase of the matter. Assuming that it was right to assess these public properties to income-tax, the result was they that brought as contributors to the income-tax small ratepayers of less than £160 a year, a limit of income which did not contribute at all. The cost of providing and maintaining public works like sewers came out of the rates, paid to a large extent by ratepayers whose incomes were under £160 a year. The assessment being under Schedule A, the income-tax which the property had to bear was 1s. in the £, so that the small ratepayers had to bear the burden on the higher scale. He ventured, therefore, to bring this decision to the attention of the Treasury and of his right hon. friend the President of the Local Government Board, who was also concerned in the matter.

MR. ASQUITH said he did not propose to add anything to what he had already said in his Budget speech on the subject of graduation. He must, however, refer to the point which had been raised by the hon. and learned Member for Mid. Glamorganshire. The decision he referred to had only recently been brought to his notice. It had come upon him as an old practitioner in these matters with some degree of surprise. As he happened to be Chancellor of the Exchequer he should be the last to complain if the sewers of the country, which had so long been exempt, now contributed to the income-tax. His hon. and learned friend had suggested that the decision would impose upon the small ratepayer for the first time the burden of contributing to the income-tax. He imagined that the indirect contribution of the small ratepayer under this head was almost infinitesimal. He supposed there were very few of our great municipal bodies some part of whose undertaking was not at present assessable for income-tax in respect of the profits they were making, and, therefore, the grievance was no new one. He would, of course, carefully scrutinise the development of the matter, and note whether the gloomy anticipations of his hon. and learned friend were realised, but he did not think the additional burden on the small ratepayer was likely to be serious. He appealed to the Committee to pass the clause in order that they might devote the remainder of the evening to the important questions which remained to be considered.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 18:—

*MR. JOWETT (Bradford, W.) moved an Amendment, the object of which he explained was to confine the special relief proposed to be given under the clause to those who enjoy incomes of not more than £1,000 a year. The Bill provided that in cases where the total income did not exceed £2,000 a year, the tax on earned incomes should be at the rate of 9d. in the £ instead of 1s. In his opinion, which was shared by many hon. Members and by a very large number of people outside the House, the relief given to persons whose incomes ran up to £2,000 a year was not justified, in view of the poverty which existed among other sections of the community. During the debate which followed the introduction of the Budget it was pointed out by another Member of the Labour Party that there were no fewer than 2,000,000 families in the country who were in receipt of incomes of £1 per week, and that in many cases 15s. of that £ had probably to be spent upon food alone. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had declined to give any relief to those taxpayers. He declined to reduce indirect taxation; the sugar tax was still to remain, and there was to be no reduction in the tea duty. That being the case, it appeared to him to be exceedingly unreasonable that relief should be given to those whose incomes amounted to more than £1,000. The Chancellor of the Exchequer could have given the relief of 1d. per £ reduction on tea at a cost of £1,000,000 per annum, and if his Amendment were adopted the amount yielded to the Exchequer would have defrayed this expense. The Chancellor was anxious to create a fund for old age pensions. Here was £1,000,000 a year that he could add to a nest egg which was so much spoken of. He asked hon. Members to register by their vote whether they thought with him that it was a most improper proceeding to offer relief to every individual in the community with an income of £2,000, while refusing everything except promises—given, he admitted, in good faith—to those unfortunate persons by whom the payment of every single penny was separately felt. He begged to move his Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 7, line 11, to leave out the word 'two,' and insert the word 'one.'"—(*Mr. Jowett.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'two' stand part of the clause."

MR. ASQUITH said he had listened attentively to the speech of the hon. Member, and as far as he could follow his argument, it meant that they were giving too much relief to the income-tax payer and too little relief to the consumer in the shape of remission of indirect taxation. The hon. Gentleman had not argued his case on its merits. The Select Committee which reported on the subject were, he believed, unanimously in favour of £3,000 as the limit.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said the Committee was unanimous in regard to £2,000, but not £3,000. But, even the differentiation below £2,000 was only assented to by himself in connection with the adoption of graduation.

Mr. ASQUITH said that, at any rate, the Report recommended £3,000, and he gathered that they were unanimous as regarded £2,000. To draw an arbitrary line in a matter of this kind was extremely difficult. It was impossible, perhaps, in one sense, to justify the exclusion of a man who had £2,001 a year while another with £1,999 was included, but that was a common feature of all systems of graduation. To use an old phrase, "you must draw the line somewhere." In drawing the line there might be undue benefit on one side, and undue hardship on the other. He had been asked why he had made the limit £2,000. He had done so because it was the only practical way of bringing relief to a class of income-tax payers who were eminently entitled to come within the scope of his ameliorative measure of differentiation. Who were they? They were the smaller business class and professional men whose incomes ranged from £700 to £2,000 a year. He did not speak of the class with incomes up to £700, because they had already relief in the shape of abatements. He wished to bring in for relief the smaller business men, and also employees who, no doubt, were in positions of considerable responsibility, and, above all, the professional men of the country on whom the present scale of income-tax bore very hardly. To confine the limit to incomes of £1,000 would be to leave out of the scope of the remedial measure a large number of persons who were entitled to it. A country doctor might be earning £1,500 a year, and if they took into consideration his necessary expenses in order to maintain his position as a professional man among his neighbours—the expenses of his house, the bringing up of children, and the maintaining of the standard of external comfort and appearance, and it should be remembered that that was all contingent upon the maintenance of his health and the duration of his life, for when health failed or life ceased, all those dependent upon him were left entirely at the mercy of fortune—if they compared that man's income with a corresponding income which a man derived from investments, it was impossible for anybody to argue that the tax fell with equal weight upon both men. By maintaining the tax at an equal rate as between those different classes, a grievance was inflicted upon the middle classes of the country who earned their incomes, and that was what made the tax so unpopular among them and so difficult to collect. The hon. Gentleman opposite had brought before the notice of the House the position of those who were specially called the labouring class. The hon. Member and his friends in their legitimate and most proper desire to remove avoidable hardship from their own class, when they were dealing with a tax which did not directly affect that class—although he believed that in the long run it did affect them if it did not do so directly—should not forget the grievance and injustice which the income-tax in its higher scales inflicted on those who were subject to it. He was perfectly certain that it was the duty of the Government to retain the tax, and he could not imagine any Chancellor of the Exchequer contemplating our financial future in the absence of the income-tax, and, he would say, the income-tax at a substantial figure. He would say that the incorporation of the income-tax as a permanent part of the financial machinery of the country was incumbent on them, but they should see that as among the classes on whom it fell its incidence was as fair and equitable as possible. Now that they had come to the conclusion that it was not a temporary but a permanent tax, their first duty it seemed to him was to see how far they could make it fair among those upon whom it fell. If the Government were to accept the terms of the Amendment of the hon. Member, there would be left out of the remedial operation of the scheme a very large number of people who, in his judgment, were specially deserving of differential and equitable treatment. He earnestly appealed to hon. Members to look at this matter on its own merits, and to consider it as it affected the different classes of income-tax payers. If they agreed with him that the income-tax must be treated as part of our financial system, he asked them to assist in making it as just as possible to those sections of the community upon whom it had hitherto pressed with undue severity.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 237; Noes, 45. (Division List No. 266.)

AYES.

Acland, Francis Dyke
Alden, Percy
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Ashley, W. W.
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Baring, Capt. Hn. G. (Winchester
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.
Barry, Redmond J. (Tyrone, N.
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, Sir J. Williams (Devonp'rt
Benn, W. (Tw'r Hamlets, S. Geo.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bethell, Sir J. H. (Essex, Romf'rd
Billson, Sir Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Boulton, A. C. F.
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brigg, John
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Brooke, Stopford
Bryce, J. Annan
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burns, Rt. Hn. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cameron, Robert
Carlile, E. Hildred
Causton, Rt. Hn. Richard Knight
Cave, George
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Chance, Frederick William
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Clough, William
Coates, E. Feetham (Lewisham)
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew, W.)
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras, W.
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.)
Craik, Sir Henry
Dalrymple, Viscount
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dewar, Sir J. A. (Inverness-sh.)
Dickinson, W. H. (St. Pancras, N.
Dobson, Thomas W.
Duckworth, James
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Sir Francis (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Erskine, David C.
Essex, R. W.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Evans, Samuel T.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fell, Arthur
Ferens, T. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Fletcher, J. S.
Fuller, John Michael F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Glendinning, R. G.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Gordon, J.
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Gretton, John
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haddock, George R.
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, J. M. (Aberdeen, W.)
Herbert, Col. Sir Ivor (Mon., S.)
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Hervey, F. W. F. (Bury S. Edm'ds
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Holt, Richard Durning
Hope, W. Bateman (Somerset, N.
Jackson, R. S.
Jardine, Sir J.
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
King, Sir Henry Seymour (Hull)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich)
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Liddell, Henry
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
M'Callum, John M.
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Micking, Major G.
Magnus, Sir Philip
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston)
Massie, J.
Menzies, Walter
Meysey-Thompson, E. C.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Montagu, E. S.
Moore William
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Newnes, Sir George (Swansea)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Charles N. (Doncast'r
Nield, Herbert
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Partington, Oswald
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Philipps, Col. Ivor (S'thampton)
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, E.)
Priessley, Arthur (Grantham)
Priestley, W. E. B. (Bradford, E.)
Pullar, Sir Robert
Radford, G. H.
Rawlinson, John Frederick Peel
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renton, Major Leslie
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Ronaldshay, Earl of
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann, Sir C. E. (Manchester)
Scott, A. H. (Ashton under Lyne
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smith, F. E. (Liverpool, Walton
Soares, Ernest J
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.)
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Sir Edward (Salisbury)

Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomasson, Frankin
Thompson, J. W. H. (Somerset, E
Thomson, W. Mitchell- (Lanark)
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Walrond. Hon. Lionel
Walters, John Tudor
Walton, Sir John L. (Leeds, S.)
Waring, Walter
Wraner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, Henry A.
Weir, James Galloway
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.-
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson, Hon. C. H. W. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh, N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Winfrey, R.
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Barnes, G. N;
Black, Arthur W.
Brace, William
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Cleland, J. W.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Davies, Ellis William (Eifion)
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Edwards, Enoth (Hanley)
Fenwick, Charles
Fullerton, Hugh
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Gill, A. H.
Glover, Thomas
Hall, Frederick
Harvey, W. E. (Derbyshire, N.E.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Henry, Charles S
Houston, Robert Paterson
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J. M. (Falkirk B'ghs)
Masterman, C. F. G.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Morpeth, Viscount
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
Parker, James (Halifax)
Pearce, Robert (Staffs., Leek)
Raphael, Herbert H.
Richardson, A.
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Steadman, W. C.
Wadsworth, J.
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walton, Joseph ((Barnsley)
Wardle, George J.
White, George (Norfolk)
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Wilson. W. T. (Westhoughton)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Jowett and Mr. Charles Duncan.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH asked whether after the Committee had passed certain words it was in the power of the Committee to raise the question of the interpretation of those words.

*THE CHAIRMAN said he did not think there would be any difficulty in this case; because Subsection (7) gave the definitions and the question would properly arise then.

MR. J. F. MASON moved to leave out the words "the rate of ninepence," in order to insert "three-fourths of the normal rate." He proposed this Amendment in no spirit of antagonism, but with a view to throwing out a suggestion which might be useful to the Chancellor of the Exchequer in dealing with this subject in the future. It would simplify his work and make the intention clear in regard to the two classes of income-tax payers. As the Bill stood at present the two classes were dealt with in two clauses of the Bill. On the question of a decrease or increase in the normal rate the case of the 9d. tax-payers would have to be considered by itself, but his suggestion was that some ratio between the two classes should be established, so that if the normal tax was increased the special tax should be increased also. He was quite aware that this might be a difficult thing to do, and might mean calculations going into farthings, but after all that was not serious. Since he put down the Amendment it had occurred to him that it might be easier instead of a ratio to establish a difference, and say that the rate in one class should be so many pence less than the other. His desire was that something should indicate that it was not the intention to increase or decrease the rate in one class, and leave the other fixed for all time.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 7, line 16, to leave out the words 'the rate of ninepence,' and insert the words 'three-fourths of the normal rate.'"—(*Mr. J. F. Mason.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

MR. McKENNA said that the hon. Gentleman had admitted the difficulty of applying his Amendment in practice. His real objection to the proposal was that it would be unwise to indicate any desire to bind the action of future Parliaments as to the relation between the two classes of income-tax payers. Special circumstances might arise which would have to be dealt with in the arrangements for a particular year.

SIR F. BANBURY said he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that it would be unwise to fix a ratio between the two classes of income-tax payers. As he understood the position, the reason for the difference of abatement was that the Chancellor of the Exchequer found he was unable to reduce the income-tax which at present stood at 1s., and the right hon. Gentleman had also told the Committee that he did not mean that that shilling tax should be imposed for ever—that it was impossible to reduce it this year, but that perhaps it might be possible to reduce it in the next three or four years. The right hon. Gentleman had admitted that it was a heavy charge on those who had earned income only, and therefore earned incomes under £2,000 were to be charged at the rate of 9d. Personally he did not approve of one income-tax for a man who had an income of, say, £2,100, and another tax for a man who had an income of £2,000. However, he agreed that the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was the best solution of a very difficult case.

MR. MYER (Lambeth, N.) said that, as to the abatement on incomes of £2,000 and under, he failed to see the difference between earned and unearned income. There were many persons, particularly women, who were in receipt of a certain income from private property, and they were deserving of a good deal of consideration on the part of the Government.

MR. ASQUITH said that that question arose on another Amendment.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that the hon. Member for the City of London was of a very sanguine nature, if he expected that the whole income-tax would be shortly collected at 9d. He did not think that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had even expressed a pious opinion that he would be able to reduce the income-tax soon. It must be remembered that if the House sanctioned the right hon. Gentleman's attempt at differentiation between the two classes of income-tax payers, a step would be taken on which there was no going back. He wished to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what was in his mind when he stated in the course of the debate that the normal course should be to maintain the difference between the two classes at 3d., or whether in speaking of elasticity he only referred to incomes on a higher scale.

MR. ASQUITH said that when he spoke of the greater elasticity which in his view would be given to the tax by this differentiation he had in his mind primarily the tax as a whole. He thought it much easier in a case of emergency to raise the tax as a whole. Every Chancellor of the Exchequer, however, had to consider the question for himself.

MR. J. F. MASON asked leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. HICKS BEACH (Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury) moved to leave out from Sub-section 2 of Clause 18 words which provided that relief under this section should only be given in respect of such earned income, if any, as remained after deducting the amount on which a person was relieved of the tax under Section 8 of the Finance Act, 1898, and Section 54 of the Income Tax Act, 1853. He said it appeared from the sub-section under consideration that a man with, say, £300 a year, of which £160 was earned and £140 unearned, would get no more relief than the man with £300 a year the whole of which was unearned. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer wished to grant relief to persons whose income was earned he ought to do it all through.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 7, line 19, to leave out all the words after 'Acts' to end of sub-section."—(*Mr. Hicks Beach.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said that under the Bill as it stood no one would be worse off than before; that was to say, all the relief given was in addition to existing relief, and therefore in no case was any injury done. The reason why the abatement would be taken off the earned income in the first place rather than from the unearned portion was a question of administration as well as one of revenue. The real difficulty was in respect of administration.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.) called attention to the fact that forty Members were not present.

MR. CONOR O'KELLY (Mayo, N.) asked the Deputy-Chairman whether, when an objection of this kind was taken, it was customary to take account of the number of Members in the House at the time, because he contended there were forty in the House though they might not have been visible to the hon. Member for North Down.

House counted; and forty Members being found present—

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said the administrative difficulty in the way of meeting the proposal of the hon. Member for Tewkesbury was that the whole of the abatement and questions arising in connection therewith would have to stand over until later in the year. At the present moment, in the large majority of cases, the abatement was given at once and without question on the information supplied by the applicant. As regarded the unearned portion of income, in the vast majority of cases the tax was recovered at the source and had to be claimed back by the individual at a later stage. It must be obvious, therefore, that if the abatement was to be taken from both kinds of income combined, instead of from one, the whole of the abatement would have to be claimed at a later stage. From the point of view of both convenience and expense the proposal in the Bill was much better. Another disadvantage which would accrue to the applicants if the Amendment was accepted was that they would have to return the whole of their incomes, to which people somewhat objected. Under the Bill they would only have to return the earned income and the abatement would be granted at once. The proposal would also cause a very considerable loss of revenue, and on the whole the conclusion come to was that the method proposed under the Bill was the better and fairer way.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said the point was one of such great importance that he regretted they had to discuss it at that hour and in a very thin House. It affected an enormous number of people, and those among the poorest of income-tax payers, who by the inclusion of the words which his hon. friend had moved to leave out were refused the relief which was given to other people in like circumstances. Before he treated the question on its merits he would like to say a few words on the statement made by the Postmaster-General in his defence of this clause as to the administrative difficulties. His refusal to give the proposed relief was based on the fact that the administrative difficulties in the way of the Amendment were too great. He did not think that was so, and he did not think that ought to be made an objection. He viewed with distrust the whole of this attempt at differentiation, because there was no doubt that the administrative difficulties were extremely great, and whatever solution was applied an injustice would be done to a great number of people. But if the Chancellor of the Exchequer was going to carry out this principle of differentiation he must be prepared to face administrative difficulties in order that he might deal out even-handed justice. Another objection taken to his hon. friend's proposal was that if it were adopted it would be necessary for applicants for relief to disclose the whole of their incomes—a thing which the taxpayer very much disliked doing. But he would have to do that under the Finance Bill. The Postmaster-General did not appear to have read the Bill he was attempting to defend. How was a man to prove that his income was below, say, £2,000 from all sources, without making such a disclosure?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: He does not get any benefit.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Did the right hon. Gentleman seriously put that forward as the reason? That was an argument against the whole clause. If the right hon. Gentleman said it was so distasteful to the taxpayer then these administrative difficulties would not hold water for a moment. There might be administrative difficulties in the eyes of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but he had not heard them. So far as they were stated by the Postmaster-General, he thought he had proved that they would not hold water. As to the merits of the case, they had long agreed that in regard to incomes up to £700 a year income-tax should not be collected on the whole, but that certain abatements should be allowed. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had now introduced an entirely new principle—namely, that incomes dependent on personal exertion should be charged at a lower rate than those which arose from investment, and he made a qualification that the relief should only be given in the case of incomes which did not exceed a certain sum. From the fact that a limit was fixed it might logically be deduced that the smaller the income the greater was the claim to relief. But the right hon. Gentleman was refusing the benefit of the new relief to the poorest people in many cases. In the case of a man with an income of £300, £160 derived from his own exertions and £140 unearned, by the words they were now discussing the Chancellor of the Exchequer would exclude him from relief, his first ground being that he left the man no worse off than before. That was true, but the only reason for putting the clause into the Bill was that people in such a position should have some relief. The second ground was that of administrative difficulty. No doubt it would cost the right hon. Gentleman a certain amount of money if he gave way, but if he did not he would create a sense of injustice in the minds of the people deprived of relief. Supposing a man earned £300 a year, £160 of that would be exempt from tax under the old abatement, and on the remaining £140 he would pay tax at 9d. What possible justification was there for treating the old abatement in the first case in such a way as to reduce the new relief? It was unjust and illogical, and the injustice became the greater in the case of the smallest incomes.

MR. ASQUITH said the argument put forward by the right hon. Gentleman was just the kind of argument that he expected to receive. The Government gave relief, and in the Bill made that relief as wide as possible, consistently with administrative convenience and the purposes of revenue, and then hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite selected the case of a person who did not get any benefit, because he was just outside the changes put forward by the Government, and argued that case as a reason for not giving any relief whatever. He would take the case of two men with £300 a year. Under the existing law they got the usual abatement. In the one case the whole income was derived from earnings, while in the other £140 a year came from investments and £160 from earnings. Which of those two men was the better off and less entitled to relief? Surely the man who had £140 a year from investments. In other words, the man who ought rather to be relieved was the man whose whole income was derived from his earnings. He would be the man who got relief, the other man would not. And if any other concrete case were taken, it would work out in the same way. They could not have a better illustration of the essential justice of the Government's proposal. The point only arose in regard to that class of cases which were already within the abatement lines. The income-tax payer who was getting less than £700 a year, already under the present system received considerable relief, and he was not sure whether the hardest case was not the case of the man with just over £700 a year, who got no relief at all. With regard to those who were under £700 they had provided that the new form of relief should not be in substitution for, but in addition to, that which they already received; but when they came within that class it was perfectly fair that the discrimination, so far as they made it, should be in proportion to, and according as, the income was derived wholly or mainly from investments.

They took the income and taxed it as it was, and if the man wanted abatement or relief, he could claim it just as now, and from the administrative point of view the plan of the Government was obviously much simpler than that suggested by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, for it combined the existing arrangement with the new arrangement which it was the intention of this Bill to establish.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said it did not seem to him that it was justice to a man with an earned income of £1,999 that he should pay at the rate of 9d. because the income was earned, and that a man who had £160 of earned income and £140 of unearned should be denied that relief on his unearned income.

MR. ASQUITH: He pays no income-tax at all on his earned income.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said the man with such an income got no advantage. He was refused the advantage which the man of £1,999 got. He did not follow the administrative difficulty to which reference had been made. A man could make a return under either system. If he claimed under the Chancellor of the Exchequer's clause he had got to show his whole income yearly. If he was entitled to any abatement under the old Act he had got to get that back from the Inland Revenue who had previously collected it. He would have to do that under any circumstances, and what the Chancellor of the Exchequer was trying to do was to save the administration some trouble by making the taxpayers pay a higher rate. He was perfectly frank about these matters; he did not pretend to think that these changes were good, and, for the very reasons he had stated, these difficulties would arise, and they would implant a great sense of injustice in the minds of a large number of people, and he thought that that sense of injustice would be well founded unless the Chancellor of the Exchequer made some concession in these matters.

*MR. GEORGE D. FABER (York) said that a man with £300 a year earned income was at present entitled to abatement in regard to £160 of it, and therefore he was taxed on £140 a year. Would he be entitled to the differentiation of 3d. on the whole of his £300 or only on the £140 after deducting the £160? Let them take the case of an income of £700 or over; that got no abatement at all because it was above the abatement line, but if a man had above £700 and under £2,000 a year earned income he was to be entitled to the differential relief of 3d. in the £. Surely that was very hard when they compared it with the poorer class of incomes which had been referred to. They were telling the whole country that everybody under £2,000 was to pay a rate of 9d. if his income was earned, and therefore if a man had an income of £300, he should have the benefit of the differentiation of 3d. upon the whole of the £300 and not merely on £140, the balance remaining after deducting the abatement. Therefore the man with an income of under £700 would not get the benefit of the full differentiation which was to be given to the man with £700 up to £2,000. It was quite clear to his mind that incomes under £700 were going to suffer very serious injustice.

*MR. HICKS BEACH said the Chancellor of the Exchequer had drawn the analogy of a man with an income of £300 a year all earned. He ventured to draw the analogy of a man with an income of £300 of which £160 was earned and £140 unearned. It was quite true that the man whose income of £300 was all earned ought to have the preference over the man who only earned £160 of his £300 a year, but the man of £160 earned and £140 unearned was no better off and in no better position than the man with an unearned income of £300 a year. That was a point which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not taken up. The Postmaster-General had told them that nobody would suffer. It was true that nobody would be worse off under this section than before. The whole point of the clause was to give the people relief in respect of earned income; but under the section as it stood they were not going to give relief to the people with small incomes, though they were entitled to it. The right hon. Gentleman had used another argument which had reference to the loss of revenue, but that was no reason why the Government should not give the advantage to the people with small incomes instead of to the people with large incomes. If it was the case that they would lose a considerable amount of revenue, then the only thing they ought to do was to reduce the limit of £2,000 a year to £1,500. It was not the people with higher incomes who ought to get so much relief, it was the people with smaller incomes. The right hon. Gentleman had made a great point of the administrative difficulty in regard to the question of claiming abatements, and of the hardship of claimants who had to lose control over a sum of money for a considerable time; but he had heard people who were entitled to claim abatement declare that they found the system of repayment very pleasant, and even went so far as to assert that they preferred to have the income-tax at a higher figure because they got back a larger sum of money at the time they got their abatement.

*Mr. LUPTON asked the Committee to consider, by way of illustration, the case of a man with an income of £800 a year, and another man with £300 a year. If there were no abatement at all, one of them would pay £15 a year and the other £40. Under the system of abatement which existed before this Bill the man with £300 a year had an abatement of £8, whilst the £800 a year man got no abatement at all. Under the new Act the £300 a year man got an abatement of 3d. on £140 so that he was allowed £9 15s., whilst the other man got 3d. on his £800 which amounted to £10. The man with an income of £800 a year paid £30, and the £300 a year man paid £4 5s. It seemed to him that the £300 a year man had nothing to complain about whatever.

Sir F. BANBURY said that although the hon. Member for Sleaford had given his illustration very clearly he was afraid the hon. Member had not grasped the meaning of this proposal. The hon. Member had apparently founded his case upon the assumption that the whole of the £800 a year was earned and the whole of the £300 as well. The case cited by his hon. friend was one in which part of the income was earned and part unearned.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.) regretted that hon. Members opposite did not oftener endeavour to assist the Government in shaping these financial proposals in the way they attempted to do on the Opposition side of the House. The real truth of the matter was that all sources of income were being so rapidly diminished under this Government that less and less interest was being taken in the income-tax. There were still a few small incomes left, and he thought the Government, through the solitary Under-Secretary who was now sitting on the Treasury Bench might endeavour to say something in defence of those who were earning small incomes. No reply had been been advanced by the Government, and he hoped the Financial Secretary to the Treasury would explain to the Committee how these small incomes would be protected under these proposals.

Mr. E. GARDNER (Berkshire, Wokingham) asked the Committee to consider the case of two persons, one with an income of £300 a year all earned, and another with £160 earned and £140 unearned. Under the existing system the man with £300 a year got an abatement of £160, leaving him £140 on which he had now to pay £7. Under the new system on that £140 he would have to pay 9d. instead of 1s., and so he would get off with paying £5 5s. The saving fellow, however, who had £160 earned, and £140 unearned which he had saved, would get his abatement on the £160, but he would have to pay 1s. on the £140. That supported the view which had been expressed that this allowance of 3d. was in the nature of a fugitive sum of money. [Opposition cries of "Reply."]

Mr. RUNCIMAN said that all these matters had been fully dealt with by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Postmaster-General, and any further reply would only be repetition.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 232; Noes, 39. (Division List No. 267.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir

Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker,Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barry,Redmond J. (Tyrone,N.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beck, A. Cecil
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn,W.(T'w'r Hamlets,S.Geo.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bethell,SirJ.H. (Essex,Romf'rd
Billson, Sir Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W.
Boulton, A. C. F.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brigg, John
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Bryce, J. Annan
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton,Rt.Hn. SydneyCharles
Cairns, Thomas
Cameron, Robert
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton,Rt.Hn.RichardKnight
Chance, Frederick William
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Clynes, J. R.
Coats,Sir T.Glen(Renfrew, W.)
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins,SirWm.J.(S.Pancras,W.
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, David (MontgomeryCo.
Davies, Ellis Wiliam (Eifion)
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dickinson,W.H. (St.Pancras,N.
Dobson, Thomas W.
Duckworth, James
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne,Major E.Martin(Walsall
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Sir Francis (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Essex, R. W.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gill, A. H.
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hall, Frederick
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harvey,W.E.(Derbyshire, N.E.
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson,J.M.(Aberdeen, W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert,Col.Sir Ivor (Mon, S.)
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Hobart, Sir Robert
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Holland, Sir William Henry
Holt, Richard Durning
Hope,W.Bateman(Somerset,N.
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jackson, R. S.
Jardine, Sir J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones,Sir D.Brynmor(Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Kekewich, Sir George
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lamont, Norman
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese,SirJoseph F. (Accrington
Lever, A.Levy (Essex,Harwich
Lever,W.H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald,J.M.(Falkirk Bg'hs)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks,G.Croydon (Launceston)
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Menzies, Walter
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. G.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Newnes, Sir George (Swansea)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson,Charles N. (Donc'r.)
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Pearce, Robert (Staffs., Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Price,Robert John (Norfolk,E.)
Priestley, Arthur (Grantham)
Priestley,W.E.B. (Bradford,E.)
Pullar, Sir Robert
Radford, G. H.
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Robertson,Sir G.Scott (Bradf'd
Robinson, S.
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel S. M. (Whitechapel)
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Scott,A.H.(Ashton underLyne)
Seaverns, J. H.
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Soares, Ernest J.
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn.A.Lyulph (Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, Sir A.(Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas,David Alfred (Merthyr
Thomasson, Franklin
Thompson,J.W.H. (Somerset,E
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wadsworth, J.
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walters, John Tudor
Walton, Sir John L. (Leeds, S.)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wardle, George J.
Waring, Walter
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, Henry A.
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williamson, A.
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)

Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, J.W. (Worcestersh.N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Winfrey, R.
Wood, T. M'Kinnon

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Acland, Hood, Rt. Hn. Sir Alex. F
Balcarres, Lord
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.)
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bowles, G. Stewart
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. H. M.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt. Hn. Victor C. W.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A. (Worc.
Collings, Rt. Hn. J. (Birmingh'm
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fell, Arthur
Forster, Henry William
Gordon, J.
Haddock, George R.
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Houston, Robert Paterson
King, Sir Henry Seymour (Hull)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Magnus, Sir Philip
Moore, William
Nield, Herbert
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Rawlinson, John Frederick Peel
Remnant, James Farquharson
Thomson, W. Mitchell-(Lanark)
Turnour, Viscount
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Hicks Beach and Mr. Ernest Gardner.

*MR. HICKS BEACH moved to substitute 31st January for 30th September as the date in the year before which claims for relief under this section must be made. It appeared to him that 30th September was an unnecessarily early date to require a person to make a claim for relief in respect of earned income. He submitted that it was impossible for anybody to say for certain at that date what his income was likely to be before 31st March. It was quite possible that at 30th September a man might have an investment in funds of a rather precarious nature, and, although he might hope to receive a dividend in January or February of the ensuing year, some act of nature might happen which would prevent the concern from producing the dividend at the time expected. It was obvious that a man who thought on September 30th that he was in receipt of an income of over £2,000 a year would not claim the abatement on the earned portion; but he might find before 31st March that his total income was below £2,000, and that he was therefore entitled to relief on his earned income which he would not be able to receive as he had failed to send in a claim. There was an alternative case in which a man might send in a return before 31st September, and claim abatement in the full belief that his income would not rise above £2,000, but something might happen which would give him an income above that figure before 31st March in the following year. That man would make a claim that he was entitled to an abatement on the earned portion of his income, but at the end of the financial year he would not be entitled to have that abatement. He would like to get an explanation as to the necessity for fixing a date which seemed unnecessarily early.

Amendment proposed—

> "In page 7, line 39, to leave out the words 'thirtieth day of September,' and insert the words 'thirty-first day of January.'"—(*Mr. Hicks Beach.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. RUNCIMAN said the hon. Gentleman had quite rightly described the dilemma in which they were placed in regard to the date. The arrangement of the claims and returns sent in must of necessity involve a great deal of work on the Inland Revenue Department. At present there were 700,000 claims for abatements, and 600,000 of these were dealt with at the time of assessment. All that the clause required was that a claim should be made before 31st September. The special administrative reason was this. If a claim was made after the Commissioners had commenced their sittings in October there would be an enormous addition to the work of the Inland Revenue officials. The Government could not see their way to make the date for sending in claims later than 31st September. The position which would arise in the special cases mentioned by the hon. Gentleman were natural and unavoidable. It was quite true that a man might find, contrary to expectation, that his income fell to under £2,000 after sending in his return. That was a case for which he did not see any way of providing. The other suggestion was that a man might get a windfall which would give him an income of over £2,000, and that he would get relief to which he was not entitled. The one case must be set off against the other, and they would balance each other so far as the Revenue was concerned.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he appreciated the administrative difficulty to which the Financial Secretary had alluded. The hon. Gentleman admitted, as he was obliged to do, that cases might arise where one man would be charged more and another less than he ought to pay. The hon. Gentleman said that such cases could not be prevented, and that, from the point of view of the Revenue, the one case might be set off against the other. The man who had paid too little would not be inclined to complain, and he might be inclined to contribute "conscience money" to the Exchequer as many people did now. The case of the other man who had paid too much was one of real hardship. He did not wish to press for an immediate decision on the point, but he thought it was worthy of the consideration of the Government to see whether they could not grant an opportunity to an individual to make an amended return where he could show that new facts had arisen which entitled him to make the claim for relief after the date when his statement ought to have been made. He asked the hon. Gentleman to convey that suggestion to the Chancellor of the Exchequer with a view to its being considered.

Mr. RUNCIMAN said he would do that, but at the same time the right hon. Gentleman must see how dangerous it would be to give relief in all cases under the circumstances which had been indicated.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said the onus of proof would rest on the man who claimed to make an amended return.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: We will take that into consideration.

Sir F. BANBURY, in supporting the Amendment, maintained that the case mentioned by his hon. friend, in which a man unexpectedly found that his income did not come up to the amount stated in his return, was one where something should be done to give relief. The difficulty would, in some measure, be met by changing the date as proposed by the Amendment. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would consider the point which had been raised by the Amendment of the hon. Member for Tewkesbury. This was only another instance of the great difficulty which lay at the root of any attempt to graduate the income-tax.

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause," put, and agreed to.

Sir F. BANBURY (on behalf of Lord R. Cecil) moved to insert after the words "earned income," the words "whether by way of salary or share of profits for any office, or employment of profit in the year of assessment." The reason for moving the Amendment was very simple. His noble friend had had a case brought before him of certain partners in a business who, for private reasons, formed the business into a limited liability company, and they decided that their remuneration should be by way of dividends paid to the shareholders by the company, and not by way of salary. It was extremely doubtful whether in such a case these persons would be entitled to the abatement of 3d. in the pound, because it might be held that they were not receiving an earned income, but a share in the dividends of the company. He believed that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had told his noble friend that such a case was provided for, but his noble friend disagreed with the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. ASQUITH: I do not think he does.

Sir F. BANBURY said that his noble friend had told him that in his opinion the Chancellor of the Exchequer was mistaken, and that that was the reason why he had requested him to move this Amendment. If the Chancellor of the

Exchequer admitted the justice of its principle, he might accept the Amendment or insert words giving effect to it.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 7, line 12, after the second word 'income,' to insert the words 'whether by way of salary or share of profits for any office, or employment of profit in the year of assessment.'"—(*Sir F. Banbury.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. ASQUITH said he quite agreed that this was a case which ought to come within the definition, and he thought it did. He had pointed out to the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone that his Amendment were limiting words. The word "remuneration" was carefully selected after a great deal of consideration, and any form of remuneration, whether by way of direct payment of salary, or the more indirect methods of commission or share of profits, was certainly covered. The real objection to the Amendment was that it would limit, according to the principles of legal construction, the wide sense of the term "remuneration" standing alone. The Amendment would be held by the Court to exclude, for example, remuneration by way of commission, and to apply only to cases of salary or share of profits. Wherever it could be shown that the whole of a man's income or a specific part, in whatever form it was received, was received by him in the way of remuneration, it would fall within "earned income," and therefore would come within the abatement.

SIR F. BANBURY asked whether it would not suffice to satisfy the Income-tax Commissioners for such persons as he had described to say: "We receive no salary for the work we do, but we do receive a share of the dividends, and we claim that that is our remuneration."

MR. ASQUITH said that if the contract between them and the company was that they should not be paid a salary but a share of the profits, undoubtedly it would.

SIR F. BANBURY said that under these circumstances he asked leave to withdraw the Amendment, on the understanding that if his noble friend was not satisfied he would be able to raise the question on the Report stage.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN asked if the whole of the profits of a private company would be treated as earned income.

MR. ASQUITH said that where a partnership was transferred to a company, composed of the same people, and carrying on the business in the same way, and not offering their shares for public subscription, it was the clear intention of the Government that that should not make any difference at all. The remuneration in that case as provided for by the articles of association would still be treated as earned income.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

SIR SEYMOUR KING (Hull, Central) moved an Amendment to bring within the definition of earned income "any pension or superannuation allowance not paid out of funds contributed by the recipient, received by the individual by reason of his holding, or having held" any office or employment of profit. The cases he had in his mind were of various sorts. There was the case of clerks in banks and mercantile firms, whose pensions were only granted after years of good service. During the whole of the time no rights accrued until the employee arrived at a certain age. The clerks themselves subscribed nothing for their pensions, and they could not enforce their claims to pensions. It was not a question of a contract entered into at the time they engaged, but was a free gift on the part of the employers. In a case like that there could be no question that the pension came directly within the limitation of an earned income. He would next take the case of the military and civil services. All the regulations affecting those services began by saying that the amount of pension might be determined by the length of service. The full pension admissible was not to be given as a matter of course, or unless the service rendered had been really approved. In other words, there was no absolute claim or right to the pension, which depended on faithful service. Future good conduct was an implied condition of every kind of pension. The Government reserved to itself the right of withdrawing or withholding the pension if the pensioner were guilty of serious crime or gross misdemeanour, and in the case of the Army the regulations were still more stringent. It was impossible to argue that the pension was an acquired property like savings which a man had laid by, or an annuity he had bought which could not be taken from him. There was a further point. An income derived from any source of property could be attached at law. There was a class of pension which presented some difficulty, namely, that in which half the pension was due to a deduction of 4 per cent. of the salary. He admitted the difficulties in which no doubt the Government found themselves owing to the new position of affairs created by the report of the Income-tax Committee. He was entirely in sympathy with them in the course they had taken, and he quite approved of the limitation. They had met a demand in particular cases of barristers, doctors, journalists, and artists, and they would be doing a fair, just, and exceedingly popular act if they accepted his Amendment. He was perfectly prepared to accept any other words the Government suggested if they came to the same conclusion.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 8, line 21, to leave out the word 'from,' and insert the words 'and any pension or superannuation allowance not paid out of funds contributed by the recipient received by the individual by reason of his holding or having held.' "—(*Sir Seymour King.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'from' stand part of the clause."

Mr. ASQUITH said he must confess that this question had given him cause for anxious consideration. He was anxious to include within the scope of the clause all those cases which were cognate to it, but on the other hand he was quite as anxious not to accept expressly or by implication an Amendment which would admit to the benefit of the clause classes of income which they had deliberately excepted from it. The real question was whether a pension ought to be regarded in some form or another as remuneration or as a form of investment. He had not been able to reconcile the decision at which he had arrived with any strict and logical rule, but after giving full consideration to the matter, in consultation with his colleagues, he had come to the conclusion that the pensioner, speaking in broad and general terms, came in reason and equity, and in point of policy, upon the side of the line to which relief ought to be given. He had not come to that conclusion without a great deal of heart-searching and doubt. Broadly speaking, the exceptions were so small as to be hardly worth special treatment—a pension might be regarded as part of the stipulated remuneration for the service which the holder of the office actually rendered to his employer. It was part of the remuneration, not immediately paid, and formed part of the consideration of the bargain when the contract was made. In that respect it seemed to him to stand on an entirely different footing from savings voluntarily and spontaneously made quite outside the contract of employment. In the next place, so far as the individual pensioner was concerned—he was not now dealing with the case of widows and children—the pension ended with the pensioner's life. That was also the case with a life annuity. But a life annuity was an investment which a man purchased for the sake of securing a larger income during his life. He might, if he pleased, have invested the purchase money in a form of security which would have endured after his life. In the case of a pension there was no such option. A third and an important point was that a pension, or the expectation or possibility of receiving a pension, was not a form of property in the ordinary sense. It could not be bought and sold, nor could it be bequeathed to children. Even while the pensioner was alive it could not be dealt with like any other investment as a form of property that could be put on the market to be realised at the best price. Consequently, after much hesitation and having reviewed the whole case, it seemed to him that those three considerations justified him in assenting to the principle that the income of a pensioner should be treated as an earned income for the purposes of this clause. He believed that was a conclusion which would lead to general satisfaction. Lest he should be supposed to exaggerate his virtue in the matter or his amenity to argument, he would say that from a Revenue point of view it was a matter of very slight importance. As a matter of fact there were very few pensions in this country which did not fall within the abatement limit of £700 a year. The additional relief that would now be given to pensioners, though substantial, was not so great as it was in the case of the class above the £700 limit. But that had not actually influenced his determination in the matter, which was based on the general interest and grounds of justice. If the Committee was disposed to concur in this solution of the question, he would suggest that the hon. Member should withdraw his Amendment, whose limitation he was not disposed to accept, in order that he might move an Amendment embodying his proposal.

SIR SEYMOUR KING asked leave to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out in line 22 the words, 'in the year of assessment' in order to insert 'including any pension, superannuation allowance, or deferred pay in respect of past services in that office or employment.'"—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part"—put, and negatived.

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he was sure the concession which the right hon. Gentleman had made met with the general approbation of the Committee. Extreme hardship would have been involved in treating as unearned incomes pensions which, in fact, could only be earned by long and faithful service of a meritorious kind. He did not want to criticise the distinction which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had drawn between these pensions and other sources of income more or less cognate. He asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the words of his Amendment would cover a common case in the Civil Service, that of a man who had earned his pension partly by service in one Department and partly by service in another.

MR. ASQUITH said he would consider the point, and if necessary propose words to cover such a case on Report.

*MR. LUPTON expressed his regret that the Chancellor of the Exehequer had made this concession. There had now begun an appeal *ad misericordiam* [cries of "No."] The original Amendment was not proposed on that ground, but on the ground that a man or woman earned a precarious income which terminated as soon as their life and vigour terminated. But in the case of a pensioner the question of precarious income did not arise. There were many men and women trying to push their way in life by some trade or profession and who found it difficult to bring up a family. But this concession the House would agree would go to pensioners who had fought the fight and won, because they had secured ample pensions. They were doing no work whatever for their country and were simply vegetating upon an ample pension—he said ample pension because in the case of a pensioner with £320 a year there was already an abatement of one half of his income. These pensioners voted generally for very large expenditure on bloated armaments and were ready to vote for a war on every possible opportunity. There was no reason whatever for making an additional allowance to them. The abatement of £160 was quite enough in their case. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had opened a very wide door. The concession could not be for the good of the community. People who voted for great national expenditure should be made to pay for it. If money were deducted from wages each week, persons would be very careful how they embarked on war. In the case of richer people who were doing nothing, but were simply eating and drinking and wearing good clothes, he saw no reason whatever why they should be relieved from taxation which had to be paid by working people.

*MR. FORSTER (Kent, Sevenoaks) said he wished to ask one question under the

Amendment. There was no question that retired pay would be covered, but was it intended that good service pay should be included? He thought that the name itself implied that it had been earned. He did not know whether this point had occurred to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but he was sure that he would consider it in order to see whether it could be included. He thought that pensions for wounds were clearly included.

Mr. ASQUITH: I will see what can be done. I intended to include it, but I will see whether other words are necessary.

*Mr. SMEATON (Stirlingshire) said he rose to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman, and he was sure that hundreds of pensioners would be very grateful to him for the concession which he had so gracefully made. Still he agreed with many hon. Members of the House that it was not in reality a concession at all but a matter of strict justice, and legally as well as morally the concession was justified. It was in fact unanimously admitted both by the givers and the recipients that pension was neither more nor less than deferred pay; and after all that was the best criterion of what a pension meant. It was the wages or salary that had been kept back by the employer and preserved for the employee against the time when he ceased to work. The right hon. Gentleman in discussing this matter had said that the distinction between the pensioner and the person who accumulated savings was very thin, but he would venture to say that it was a very important one. The man who voluntarily saved money established a capital sum which he could set aside for his family, whereas the sum compulsorily accumulated by the employer in order to provide for his employee's pension, savings and pension both vanished, or rather—parodox as it might appear—the employer had the reversion of both on the death of the pensioner. That was a very substantial difference. In the case of family pensions it was a little difficult, for technical reasons, to place the case on very strong grounds. Under the Finance Act of 1894, Clause 15, Subsection 3, all family pensions granted by the Government of India were expressly exempted from estate duty, notwithstanding that those were contributed to by the deceased officers themselves. The point was this: The savings which had been contributed by the deceased officers and which formed a part of the pension fund were regarded as earnings, and he thought that would be a very strong precedent now. At that time there was no distinction between earned and unearned income, and what struck him as a remarkable fact about this particular exemption was that the money saved and accumulated at the end of the officer's life was regarded, not as capital yielding an income, but as an earned sum of money. He took it that now that earnings were to be exempt from a certain part of the income-tax, this precedent to which he had referred ought to be taken advantage of, and the family pensions considered in the same light as they were considered under the Act of 1894. The right hon. Gentleman himself had quoted the case of the poor widow referred to by Mr. Gladstone—a widow with £300 a year derived from investments. But in this case the pension was not derived from investments, but from compulsory deductions from the bread-winner's pay, and the widow had to bring up a family; yet she would (unless the lower rate were applied to her allowance) be taxed at a higher rate than the small grocer who supplied her with goods, and who would pay only 9d. in the £ while she would have to pay 1s. He hoped that this comparison by Mr. Gladstone might, in this case, be considered, even if it approached to something like the plea *ad misericordiam* of which so much had been jauntily made by the hon. Member for Sleaford. Although that might be so, still the comparison was such, he thought, that it ought to weigh with the right hon. Gentleman in considering whether it was not common justice to give to the widow, who had a family to support, under very great stress, often in ill-health and in circumstances of great difficulty, the exemption which her grocer was to enjoy. He hoped the Chancellor would adopt the view taken by Mr. Gladstone and by Sir William Harcourt in 1894 and extend the concession of the reduced rate of income-tax to the widows' pension.

*Mr. REES (Montgomery Boroughs) said the hon. Member for Sleaford had said that pensioners ate and drank, wore good clothes, and were always in favour of war and voted for it. To eat and drink was necessary to the preservation of life, to wear good clothes was a comfort not only to the wearer, but to the company he frequented, and it was true that pensioners were not as a rule peace at any price men. He might inform the hon. Member that pensioners who had spent their lives in responsible situations were not likely to adopt the views he had expressed on that subject or on vaccination, or on any other subject, and it was extraordinary that the hon. Member, who regarded it as an intolerable hardship that parents should have to carry their children for a mile or two in order to obtain exemption certificates, should speak in this hard-hearted manner of men who had served their country well. It was simply trifling with a serious subject to describe a class of men who had earned pensions by hard work and a zealous performance of their duty in the terms used by the hon. Member for Sleaford. When he brought this matter forward on a previous occasion hon. Members below the gangway appeared to indulge in ironical cheers, as much as to say, "This man is speaking on behalf of his own pension." He might mention that the concession of the lower rate for which he pleaded would not affect himself, but although he would not profit by these proposals the vast majority of pensioners would profit, and they were a class of people who stood greatly in need of the relief which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had announced. The hon. Member for Sleaford had alluded to the great pensions drawn by public servants. He would remind the hon. Member that there were public servants and public servants, and that men who had represented their country abroad were not extravagantly rich on what he believed to be the largest pension drawn, viz. £1,750 a year. Indian civil servants with families were poor men on £1,000. This was a very serious question, and both the House and the country were to be congratulated upon the decision which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had just announced in regard to the matter. As the hon. Member for Hull had withdrawn his proposal, it would not now be necessary for him to move the Amendment to it which stood in his name on the Paper. Otherwise the hon. Member's proposal would have been open to serious objection from the point of view of the Indian pensioners. Nor would it now be necessary for him to move the substantive Amendment standing in his name. As regarded the widows and children, the Indian case was quite distinct from any other, because the pension which went to the widow was literally drawn from sums contributed by the pensioner during his life, such sums being earned income at the time they were devoted to this purpose by the deceased husband. In that respect he was in complete agreement with the hon. Member for Stirlingshire. It frequently happened that such pensions were the sole support of these widows. He submitted that the case of the widows was an exceedingly strong one, and as the right hon. Gentleman was now proceeding on entirely right and satisfactory lines, perhaps he would be able to extend the same measure of justice to the widows which he had extended to the pensioners.

Mr. MEYSEY-THOMPSON (Staffordshire, Handsworth) said the hon. Member for Sleaford had spoken of pensioners as a class who lived a life of eating and drinking, but he seemed to ignore the fact that a great many of them devoted the remainder of their lives to the service of their country, some of them in Parliament. If a man accumulated wealth in business he was able to end his life in comfort, and if they desired to secure the best men for the service of the State they were bound to see that at the end of their faithful service they were not placed in any worse position than those who had spent their lives in business. He thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer had taken a very wise course in the line he had adopted, and one which would tend to induce the best men in the country to devote their services to the State.

*Sir J. JARDINE (Roxburghshire) asked if the concession which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had announced would apply to those cases where a servant had been employed for a great many years without any promise of a pension, and in which in consideration of his excellent services his employers awarded him a pension at the end of that service. As to the widows and children, being himself interested as an Indian pensioner, it would not be becoming for him to advance any arguments on that subject. He might, however, inform the Committee what was the practice of the Bombay Civil Service Fund, of which he was once the Secretary. When a man entered that service as a bachelor 2 per cent. of his earnings would be stopped, and that was raised to 3 per cent. the moment he married. Extra subscriptions based on actuarial calculations had to be paid for each son and daughter. He would add that the Government of India, which had vast experience of pension arrangements, treated pension as in essence salary deferred.

Mr. MORTON (Sutherland) asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the Amendment covered the case of all who were entitled to pensions for services rendered. He had had many communications on this subject from persons in the city of London, and he was satisfied that the concession now announced would give great satisfaction to a large class who otherwise would have felt aggrieved.

Mr. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.) said there was the case of joint income of husband and wife—the former who was still in harness earning his income, and the latter drawing a pension to which she was entitled in respect of her having been connected with some service from which she had retired. The husband would be charged at the 9d. rate, but he wished to be assured that the tax on the wife's pension would also be calculated at the lower rate.

Mr. ASQUITH said he would consider that question. In connection with the concession in regard to pensions which he had just made, he did not propose to state the form of words now; he would like to have more time to consider the exact form which the Amendment should take. He would bring up the Amendment on the Report Stage.

Question put, and agreed to.

Sir J. Jardine.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 8, line 28, after '1853,' to insert the words 'or the rules prescribed by Schedule D in the Income-tax Act, 1842.'"—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

Question put, and agreed to, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. ASQUITH moved an Amendment providing that where an income is derived from the carrying on or exercise of a profession, trade, or vocation, it shall be regarded as earned if the individual carries on the vocation "either as an individual, or, in the case of a partnership, as a partner personally acting therein." He said the object of this addition was to get rid of cases in which the person who was claiming relief had really no active concern in the earning of the income at all. There were cases in which certain companies, which were not incorporated, consisted of as many as 200 or 300 persons, who were technically partners, though in all other respects they were exactly like shareholders in a joint stock company, receiving profits, but taking no part in the management of the business.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 8, line 30, after the word 'vocation,' to insert the words, 'either as an individual, or, in the case of a partnership, as a partner personally acting therein.'"—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and agreed to.

Mr. HICKS BEACH moved to add, after the words last inserted, "or any income derived by a landowner from farming his own land." He said that if a tradesman invested a certain amount of money in a business, and was allowed to be charged on the whole of his income as being earned, it was only fair and just that a man who chose to invest his money in the purchase of a small holding and farmed it himself should come within the classes whose incomes were regarded as earned. It was obvious that a man who invested money in land, and farmed the land himself, devoted the whole of his energies to that work, just as much as a man in any other form of business devoted his energies to the work in connection therewith. The probability was that if he did not devote his whole energies to the cultivation of the land he would come to grief; but the man who devoted his energies to develop a small estate was deserving of encouragement. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was in favour of enlarging small holdings, and if he accepted this Amendment he would be doing a service to agriculture in this country, and would encourage the investment of money in the development of the land. He begged to move.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 8, line 30, to insert the words, 'or any income derived by a landowner from farming his own land.'"—(*Mr. Hicks Beach.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. ASQUITH said he did not think the Amendment would, if carried, have any effect at all. As he understood, the hon. Gentleman's point was that a landlord who farmed his own land ought to be put in a better position than the landlord who let his land to somebody else. He did not think that was a sound contention. So far as he was an occupier farming his own land he came under Schedule B, and under that schedule he was exactly the same as any other farmer under Schedule B. His income would be earned income, and it would be assessed on the lower rate, and already farmers were extremely lightly—in his opinion most inequitably—treated as regarded the general body of taxpayers for the purpose of income-tax. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh."] They were, because they only paid on one-third of their annual value. He should be glad to see Schedule B wiped out of the income-tax altogether. The landowner was taxed under Schedule B at a lower rate than any other payer of income-tax, and the hon. Member wanted him to get off Schedule A as well. Why should a man be put in a better position because he let his land to himself instead of letting it to someone else?

Mr. HICKS BEACH: He pays more income-tax than the man who invests the same money in business.

Mr. ASQUITH said that that was to raise another question—whether land was fairly assessed. But the Amendment drew a distinction between the man who farmed his own land and the man who let his land to someone else. That distinction he was not prepared to recognise.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that the question was whether the landowner was treated as favourably in respect of this concession as the man of business. The capital invested in a business was in the same position as a landlord's land. There was a perfect analogy between the active partner in a business and the man who farmed his own land.

Mr. ASQUITH said that the ownership of land had always been treated in a category by itself, and for very good reasons. Every landowner came under Schedule A, but when he farmed the land as well as owned it then he came under Schedule B as well. Under that schedule the occupier was put in a special class of his own, and in that respect he was entitled to the lower rate. Whether he owned the land or hired it, he equally brought in his capital. At this time of day he was certainly not going to make a departure from the settled practice of the Legislature.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said that the right hon. Gentleman tried to shelter himself behind the practice of the Legislature, instead of facing the arguments of the case. The right hon. Gentleman said that the income-tax was full of anomalies and injustices. They were tolerable as long as it was believed by successive Chancellors of the Exchequer that the income-tax was not a permanent part of the revenue system. Now that it was recognised on both sides of the House that the income-tax at some level was probably to be a permanent portion of our fiscal system, they should try to make it equitable. Let the Chancellor of the Exchequer try to apply the principles he had laid before the Committee to all parts of the tax which he desired to revise from top to bottom. But what was the case as to the small holder, whose interests, when the House was not discussing the Budget, occupied so large a part of the attention of the Government?

Mr. ASQUITH said the Amendment applied to every holder of land, and not to the small holder alone.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said it did not touch anyone whose income was more than £2,000 a year. It did not touch that unfortunate class who were regarded as the legitimate object of taxation by all sections of hon. Gentlemen opposite. It affected only the relatively poor man, and, for the most part, the small holder. The whole stock-in-trade of the man who put his money into some kind of business had some chance of relief, but the stock-in-trade of the small landowner was divided into two sections, one part of the produce receiving relief and one part not. The right hon. Gentleman had not succeeded in justifying that difference of treatment. Why should the right hon. Gentleman refuse to make a concession in a case and in places where he desired to see industry flourish in order that the greater vigour of the Anglo-Saxon race might be preserved? If there was any class which deserved consideration from the right hon. Gentleman it was the particular class whose interests he now refused to consider.

Mr. A. L. STANLEY (Cheshire, Eddisbury) reminded the Committee that small holders under this Bill would be tenant small holders whose income-tax would be assessed at one-third of their rent. Holdings under the Bill would not exceed fifty acres.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said he did not use the words "small holder" in the technical sense in which they were used in the Bill not yet passed. In common parlance the owners of farms 200 or 300 acres in extent might be regarded as small owners.

Mr. A. L. STANLEY said that small owners were defined in the Bill of 1892. The right hon. Gentleman would admit that when he spoke and somewhat chaffed those on that side with the interest they took in small holders that interest clearly referred to the Bill now before Parliament. The small holders who excited the sympathy of the right hon. Gentleman would be extremely small in number, inasmuch as they would have to be making a profit of £10 an acre or £480 a year for their small holdings. Sympathy for such holders was not very much required.

Viscount HELMSLEY (York, N.R., Thirsk) supported the Amendment on the ground that it did something to relieve a very deserving class of men who were far too few in numbers at the present time, namely, the class of yeomen farmers. He was disappointed that the right hon. Gentleman had treated the Amendment in so unsympathetic a manner. More opposition was levelled against that class, though they were pursuing this industry, than any other in the country. The right hon. Gentleman and hon. Gentlemen opposite must carry their antipathy to such an extent that it even took effect when these men were farming their own land. He saw no objection to this Amendment and he certainly hoped it would be carried to a division.

*Mr. LUPTON said that the senior Member for the City of London had said that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not given any reason why, if he were starting the income-tax *ab initio*, no concession should be made to a landowner farming his own land under Schedule A. He (Mr. Lupton) would endeavour to give him such a reason. Suppose that in the same parish there were two men, one a landowner farming his own land and making a gross profit of £1,000 a year, the other a manufacturer working his own factory and also making a gross profit of £1,000 a year. In each case the gross profit might be divided into two equal figures, £500 a year rent, £500 a year profit. The factory owner might take the whole of the gross profit as wages of management, and in that case would get a reduction on his income-tax of 3d. in the £, or £12 10s. The landowner, on the other hand, would only get a reduction of 3d. in the £ on half the gross income, the full tax being payable on the other half, which was rent. Therefore the rebate in his case would only be £6 5s. But if they take the total taxation, they must take into account the rates. The rates in this case were 5s. in the £, and the factory owner would pay on his £500 a year rateable value £125 in rates. The landowner, on his £500 a year rateable value, would, as a result of the Agricultural Rating Act, only pay half the amount, or £62 10s., therefore the landowner gained ten times as much on the rates as the factory owner gained on the income-tax. He thought that would be generally admitted to be a sufficient answer to the demand for a rebate under Schedule A. At the same time, he could not sympathise with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who had opened the door for similar demands by his concession in regard to pensioners.

*THE CHAIRMAN said the right hon. Gentleman was not in order in discussing a matter that had already been decided.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 85; Noes, 263. (Division List No. 268.)

AYES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hon. Sir H
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt Hn. A. J. (City Lond.)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Baring, Capt. Hn. G (Winchester
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.)
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bowles, G. Stewart
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. H. M.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt. Hon. Victor C. W.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A. (Worc
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Coates, E. Feetham (Lewisham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hn. J. (Birmingh'm
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Craik, Sir Henry
Dalrymple, Viscount
Davies, David (Montgomery Co.
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Faber, Capt. W. V. (Hants, W.)
Fell, Arthur
Fletcher, J. S.
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Gordon, J.
Gretton, John
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Helmsley, Viscount
Hervey, F. W. F. (Bury S. Edm'ds
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Houston, Robert Paterson
King, Sir Henry Seymour (Hull)
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants, Fareham
Lockwood, Rt. Hn. Lt.-Col. A. R.
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Dublin, S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Magnus, Sir Philip
Mason, Sames F. (Windsor)
Meysey-Thompson, E. C.
Moore, William
Morpeth, Viscount
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Nield, Herbert
Rawlinson, John Frederick Peel
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Ronaldshay, Earl of
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Smith, F. E. (Liverpool, Walton)
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thomson. W. Mitchell-(Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.
Turnour, Viscount
Walker, Col. W. H. (Lancashire
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Warde, Col. C. E. (Kent, Mid.)
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Armitage, R.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Astbury John Meir
Baker. Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnes, G. N.
Barry, Redmond J. (Tyrone, N.)
Beale W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, Hon. Hubert
Beck, A. Cecil
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S. Geo.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Billson, Sir Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black. Arthur W.
Boulton, A. C. F.
Brace. William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch. James
Brigg, John
Brocklehurst. W. B.
Brooke. Stopford
Bryce, J. Annan
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt. Hn. Richard Knight
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Clynes, J. R.
Coats, Sir T. Glen (Renfrew, W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm. J (S. Pancras, W.
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, C. H (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crosfield, A. H.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Ellis William (Eifion)
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dickinson, W. H. (St. Pancras, N.
Dobson, Thomas W.
Duckworth, James
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)

Dunne,Major E.Martin(Walsall
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Sir Francis (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Erskine, David C.
Essex, R. W.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Evans, Samuel T.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.Herbert John
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hall, Frederick
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harvey,W.E. (Derbyshire,N.E.
Harwood, George
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemmerde, Edward George
Henderson,J.M. (Aberdeen,W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Col. Sir Ivor (Mon.,S.)
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Hobart, Sir Robert
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Holland, Sir William Henry
Holt, Richard Durning
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hope,W.Bateman(Somerset,N.
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Jardine, Sir J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. ((Nuneaton)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones,William(Carnarvonshire)
Jowett, F. W.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese,SirJoseph F. (Accrington
Lever,A.Levy (Essex, Harwich
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald,J.M.(Falkirk B'ghs
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Micking, Major G.
Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks,G.Croydon (Launceston)
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. G.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Newnes, Sir George (Swansea)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson,CharlesN. (Doncast'r
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Pearce, Robert (Staffs., Leek)
Pearson,W.H.M. (Suffolk, Eye)
Philipps,Col.Ivor (S'thampton)
Price,Robert John (Norfolk,E.)
Priestley,W.E.B. (Bradford,E.)
Radford, G. H.
Raphael, Herbert H.
Ratcliff, Major R. F.
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson,SirG.Scott (Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Scott,A.H.(Ashton under Lyne
Seaverns, J. H.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant,Sir Edward (Salisbury
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas,Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas,David Alfred(Merthyr)
Thomasson, Franklin
Thompson,J.W.H.(Somerset,E.
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Wadsworth, J.
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walton, Sir John L. (Leeds, S.)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward,W.Dudley (Southampton
Wardle, George J.
Waring, Walter
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, Henry A.
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williamson, A.
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson,Hon. C.H.W.(Hull, W.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Winfrey, R.
Wood, T. M'Kinnon

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

MR. BRIDGEMAN (Shropshire, Oswestry) moved to insert a proviso in regard to income derived from patent rights or copyright, and said his proposal was on behalf of a class of people who were deserving of great consideration and who did not seem to him to be provided for under the Bill as it stood.

It was perfectly certain that their income was precarious and not permanent, and he could not help thinking that the right hon. Gentleman might be prepared to accept his Amendment, at any rate as far as the sense of it went.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 8, line 30, at the end to insert the words '(*d*) any income arising from patent rights or copyrights which is immediately derived by the inventor or author of the works in respect of which the rights are held.'"—(*Mr. Bridgeman.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. ASQUITH said that his belief was that incomes derived from the avocation of author or patentee already came within the operation of the clause; but he would have the point carefully considered by the Report stage in order that it might be made perfectly clear.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he had heard the right hon. Gentleman's announcement with great satisfaction. He was rather surprised to hear him state that the Bill in his opinion already covered the point. He thought he was the first person to raise this particular question in the House—[MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh"]—and the answer given by the right hon. Gentleman was not the same as that given to him by the President of the Board of Education, who contended not only that it was not in the Bill, but that it ought not to be in the Bill.

MR. BRIDGEMAN asked leave to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. FELL (Great Yarmouth) moved to add at the end of the clause, "(*d*) any income arising from investments which have been made out of savings from income derived from the exercise of any trade, profession, or vocation; (*e*) any annuity which has been purchased out of savings from income derived as in the last subsection." He could see no distinction between the case of a man who received a pension provided out of compulsory savings and that of a man who purchased an annuity out of his savings. He begged to move.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 8, line 30, at end, to insert the words '(*d*) any income arising from investments which have been made out of savings from income derived from the exercise of any trade, profession, or vocation; (*e*) any annuity which has been purchased out of savings from income derived as in the last sub-section."—(*Mr. Fell.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. ASQUITH said that in dealing with pensions he laid down the distinction. The income derived from investments was clearly not earned income in any sense in which the term could be fairly applied. He could not accept the Amendment, for it would destroy the whole foundation of the clause. As regarded annuities purchased out of savings, the same considerations applied as to other annuities, and they were nothing more than investments, whether they were made out of savings or not.

MR. HICKS BEACH said the Chancellor of the Exchequer had put himself in an absolutely illogical position. Why should a man who had saved out of his income to create a pension for himself in his old age be in a worse position than an officer, naval or military, or a civil servant who enjoyed a pension as deferred pay? By resisting this Amendment the right hon. Gentleman was putting a direct encouragement upon extravagance, because he was encouraging the professional man not to put aside any of his income, but to spend the whole of it. The right hon. Gentleman told them that it was very difficult to ascertain what investments were derived from savings. He would remind him that the whole machinery of this differentiation clause depended upon a return which the claimant had to sign himself. He had to sign a return declaring that his total income fell below a certain amount, and if he could be trusted to do that, surely they could trust him to declare which part was derived from investments, and which were direct savings out of his own pocket. He believed this proposal on the part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was a feeble attempt to get himself out of a very difficult position. He hoped his hon. friend would press this Amendment to a division.

SIR F. BANBURY said the right hon. Gentleman had asked how it was possible to tell whether investments were derived from savings or not. Upon that point his hon. friend who preceded him had anticipated his explanation, and had explained the point quite clearly. The whole foundation of this Budget rested upon the acceptance by the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the statements made by people who claimed exemption. There was no means of proving those statements, and they had to be accepted. If they were not accepted he could hardly conceive the immense number of officials who would be required to make investigations. In that matter they must take a man's word. He would like to point out to the Chancellor of the Exchequer the position in which he was putting a deserving class. The right hon. Gentleman had rightly said that pensions were deferred pay, and that those who were entitled to them would be exempted under the new Amendment. But if an Indian Civil servant who earned, say, £1,500 a year, and was compelled to put by a certain amount to provide himself with a pension, was only to be charged on the lower scale on his pension, the business man who earned the same amount and voluntarily put by to provide for old age should be treated equally well. A man in business who avoided the temptation which was much too prevalent among Englishmen of all classes to spend too much—[laughter] well, it was so—if the people of this country followed the example of the French, they would be in a very much better position, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be in a more comfortable position than now. It was really the right hon. Gentleman's own interest that he should encourage men to be thrifty, and have some regard to the responsibilities which would be incurred in the future.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 78; Noes, 252. (Division List No. 269.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Rt. Hn. Sir Alex. F.
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Ashley, W. W.
Balcarres, Lord
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Baring, Capt. Hn. G. (Winchester
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.)
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bowles, G. Stewart
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. H. M.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt. Hon. Victor C. W.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Coates, E. Feetham (Lewisham)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.)
Craik, Sir Henry
Dalrymple, Viscount
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Faber, George Denison (York)
Faber, Capt. W. V. (Hants, W.)
Fletcher, J. S.
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Gordon, J.
Gretton, John
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashf'rd
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Helmsley, Viscount
Hervey, F. W. F. (Bury S. Edm'ds
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Houston, Robert Paterson
King, Sir Henry Seymour (Hull)
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Lockwood, Rt. Hn. Lt.-Col. A. R.
Long, Rt. Hon. Walter (Dublin, S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Magnus, Sir Philip
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Meysey-Thompson, E. C.
Moore, William
Morpeth, Viscount
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Nield, Herbert
Ratcliff, Major R. F.
Rawlinson, John Frederick Peel
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Ronaldshay, Earl of
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Smith, F. E. (Liverpool, Walton)
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thomson, W. Mitchell- (Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. W. H. (Lancashire)
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Warde, Col. C. E. (Kent, Mid)
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Fell and Sir Frederick Banbury.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Armitage, R.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnes, G. N.
Barry, Redmond J. (Tyrone, N.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, Hon. Hubert
Beck, A. Cecil
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S. Geo.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Billson, Sir Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W.
Boulton, A. C. F.
Brace, William

Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Brooke, Stopford
Bryce, J. Annan
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Buxton,Rt.Hn.SydneyCharles
Byles, William Pollard
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton,Rt.Hn.RichardKnight
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Clynes, J. R.
Coats,SirT.Glen (Renfrew,W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins,SirWm.J.(S.Pancras,W.
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett,C.H.(Sussex,E.Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crosfield, A. H.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies,David (MontgomeryCo.
Davies, Ellis William (Eifion)
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W.Howell (Bristol,S,)
Dewar,Arthur (Edinburgh,S.)
Dickinson,W.H.(St.Pancras,N.
Dobson, Thomas W.
Duckworth, James
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne,MajorE.Martin (Walsall
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards,Sir Francis (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Essex, R. W.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Evans, Samuel T.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.Herbert John
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hall, Frederick
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harvey,W.E.(Derbyshire,N.E.

Harwood, George
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemmerde, Edward George
Henderson,J.M.(Aberdeen,W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert,Col.SirIvor (Mon., S.)
Hobart, Sir Robert
Holland, Sir William Henry
Holt, Richard Durning
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hope,W.Bateman(Somerset,N.
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Jardine, Sir J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William(Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese,SirJosephF (Accrington)
Lever,A.Levy(Essex,Harwich)
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Micking, Major G.
Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield,Harry (Northants)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks,G.Croydon (Launceston)
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Mond, A.
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. G.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murray, James
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson,CharlesN.(Doncaster
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
Parker, James (Halifax)

Partington, Oswald
Pearce, Robert (Staffs., Leek)
Pearson,W.H.M.(Suffolk,Eye)
Philipps,Col.Ivor(S'thampton)
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh,Central)
Price,RobertJohn (Norfolk,E.)
Priestley,W.E.B.(Bradford,E.)
Radford, G. H.
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts,Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts,John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson,SirG.Scott(Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowland, J.
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Scott,A.H. (Ashton under Lyne
Seaverns, J. H.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley,Hn.A.Lyulph (Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant,SirEdward(Salisbury)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas,DavidAlfred(Merthyr)
Thompson,J.W.H(Somerset,E.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Wadsworth, J.
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walters, John Tudor
Walton,SirJohn L.(Leeds,S.)
Ward,W.Dudley(Southampton
Wardle, George J.
Waring, Walter
Warner,Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, Henry A.
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York., E.R.)
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williamson, A.
Wills, Arthur Walters

Wilson, Hn. C. H. W. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Winfrey, R.
Wood, T. M'Kinnon

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 8, line 33, at the end, to add the words '(8) Section thirty-four of The Finance Act, 1894, shall cease to have effect so far as it gives relief or abatement to persons who are entitled to relief under Section eight of The Finance Act, 1898.' "—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

Question, "That those words be there added," put, and agreed to.

Question proposed, "That the Clause, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he did not propose to travel over the ground already traversed during the debate, but he wished to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer as to what he estimated would be the cost of the concessions he had made. The right hon. Gentleman estimated the cost of the differentiation at £1,250,000, that was to say that the incomes which would have returned £5,000,000 if the tax had applied all round would now only return £3,750,000. The right hon. Gentleman had estimated that the abatement would apply only to £100,000,000. Last week in reply to the hon. Member for Leicester the Chancellor of the Exchequer stated that the earned incomes between £160 and £2,000, which was the limit to receive the abatement, amounted to £200,000,000, and now it was admitted that the differentiation would cost £2,500,000 instead of £1,250,000. How could the two figures be reconciled? The abatement in the last year in which he was in office applied to £108,000,000. Obviously a great part of these abatements must apply to other than earned incomes. His own belief was that the right hon. Gentleman had under-estimated the cost of the concessions by about £625,000.

MR. ASQUITH said he would consider the point raised by the right hon. Gentleman. He did not think there was any discrepancy between the figures he had quoted last week and this; but the whole thing was largely conjectural, and they could not make anything but a rather rough estimate. There might be a great many unearned incomes under £2,000.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that that would not explain the discrepancy, because the right hon. Gentleman had already excluded the earned portion of incomes which were over £2,000.

MR. ASQUITH said that that did not follow at all; but if the right hon. Gentleman put down a Question he would give him the fullest information. He did not suppose that the original estimate of £1,250,000 would be largely exceeded.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that if he was not satisfied with the Answer to the Question which he would put on the Paper, he would raise the matter again on the Report stage.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

PROCEDURE (ANTICIPATORY MOTIONS).

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to consider and report upon the Procedure of the House in relation to Anticipatory Motions and Bills.

Committee accordingly nominated of,—Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Robert Cecil, Mr. Ellis, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. H. W. Forster, Sir Brynmor Jones, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Major Seely, and Mr. Shackleton.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Three be the Quorum.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

And, it being after half-past Eleven of the Clock, Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Adjourned at fourteen minutes before Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 4th July, 1907.

COMMISSION.

The following Bills received the Royal Assent:—

1. Irish Tobacco.
2. Destructive Insects and Pests.
3. London Government Scheme (Southwark Borough Market).
4. Marriages Provisional Order.
5. Metropolitan Police Provisional Order.
6. Oregon Mortgage Company, Limited, Order Confirmation.
7. Canal Tolls and Charges (New Junction Canal) Order Confirmation.
8. West Riding Tramways.
9. Medway Lower Navigation.
10. Gas Companies (Removal of Sulphur Restrictions).
11. Basingstoke Gas.
12. Falmouth Gas.
13. Staveley Coal and Iron Company.
14. Weston-super-Mare Grand Pier.
15. North-East London Railway.
16. London and North-Western Railway (Superannuation Fund).
17. Plymouth and North Devon Direct Railway (Abandonment).
18. Borax Consolidated.
19. Folkestone, Sandgate, and Hythe Tramways.
20. Manchester Ship Canal (Bridgewater Canal).
21. West Yorkshire Tramways.
22. Mitcham and Wimbledon District Gas.
23. Birmingham Corporation.
24. Newquay and District Water.
25. Middlesbrough Corporation.
26. Royal Bank of Scotland.
27. Society of Apothecaries of London.
28. Maidstone Gas.
29. Bristol Corporation.
30. Burnley Corporation.
31. Tyne Improvement.
32. Keswick Urban District Council (Water).
33. Brecon and Merthyr Tydfil Junction Railway.
34. Port Talbot Railway and Docks.
35. Manchester Ship Canal (Various Powers).
36. Shanklin Gas.
37. South-Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways.
38. Metropolitan Railway (Pension Fund).
39. Simon-Carves Bye-Product Coke Oven Construction and Working Company, Limited.
40. Grays and Tilbury Gas.
41. Brockenhurst Gas.
42. Boston Spa Gas.
43. Harrison's Patent.
44. St. Neot's Urban District Council.
45. Sutton Coldfield Rectory.
46. Birmingham Corporation Water.
47. Great Yarmouth Port and Haven.
48. Taff Vale Railway.
49. General Accident Fire and Life Assurance Corporation, Limited.
50. Ocean Accident and Guarantee Corporation.
51. Baines' Name.
52. Murphy Grimshaw's Divorce (Validation).

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that His Majesty had (by Commission) appointed the Earl Beauchamp Speaker of the House in the absence of the Lord Chancellor, or Lord Keeper, the Earl of Onslow, the Earl of Halsbury, the Earl of Waldegrave, the Lord Ribblesdale, the Lord Balfour of Burleigh, and the Lord Loreburn. The said Commission was read.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Rawtenstall Corporation Bill. Read 3^a, with the Amendments; and passed, and returned to the Commons.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

Bude Gas Bill. Consent of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, signified; and Bill reported, with Amendments.

City of London (Union of Parishes) Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Land Drainage Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill; Land Drainage Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill. Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to.

Aberdeen Corporation Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.]. A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order relating to Aberdeen Corporation was presented by the Earl Beauchamp for the Lord Hamilton of Dalzell (pursuant to the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, Sections 8 and 9); read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 93.)

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill. Moved, That the order made on the 20th day of March last, "That no Provisional Order Confirmation Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after the 18th day of June next," be dispensed with, and that the Bill be now read 2ª; agreed to. Bill read 2ª accordingly, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selecton in regard to the Dunstable Order.

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]; Tramways Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.]. Amendments reported (according to order); and Bills to be read 3ª on Monday next.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill. Read 3ª (according to order) and passed.

Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]—(Fleetwood Victoria Pier Order); Barry Railway Bill; Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway (General Powers) Bill; North Staffordshire Railway Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill—(Dunstable Order). Report from the Committee of Selection, that the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills; viz.,

E. Eldon,
L. Zouche of Haryngworth,
L. Manners,
L. Lyveden,
L. Brougham and Vaux (chairman);

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly: The Committee to meet on Wednesday next, at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill. Read 1ª; to be printed, and referred to the Examiners. (No. 94.)

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3848. France (Budget for 1907).

No. 3849. United States (New Orleans).

No. 3850. Western Pacific (Friendly Islands).

No. 3851. Turkey (Erzeroum).

MINT.

Thirty-seventh Annual Report of the Deputy Master and Comptroller of the Mint, 1906.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN SHIPPING.

LORD MUSKERRY: My Lords, I desire to put a Question of which I have given private notice to the noble Earl who represents the Board of Trade, namely, when will the Return showing the legal obligations of the owners of merchant vessels trading under the flags of certain foreign countries towards their captains, officers, and seamen, for which I moved on 28th May of last year, be laid on the Table?

THE EARL OF GRANARD: My Lords, the Return to which my noble friend refers is one which was granted on 28th May of last year with reference to foreign shipping. The Return was of a somewhat complicated nature as we had to obtain the information from different foreign Governments. I can assure your Lordships that there has been no delay whatever, so far as this country is concerned. It was only the day before yesterday that we received the information asked for from Hungary. It will therefore be readily understood that it was not possible to publish the Return before, but as soon as the whole of the information is to hand and we have had time to edit it, the Return will be laid on the Table.

THE INFANTRY MILITIA.

*THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE My Lords, I have a Question on the Paper, addressed to the Under-Secretary of State for War, with reference to the six days annual musketry training proposed for the Infantry Militia, but I understand from my noble friend that circumstances at the War Office do not make it convenient that the Answer should be given to-day. I am informed that the Army Council have not yet approved certain things about which I ask for information, and I therefore postpone the Question.

QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN (COUNTY AND BOROUGH COUNCILS) BILL [H.L.].

Order of the day read for resuming the adjourned debate on Lord Belper's Amendment to the Motion that the House do now resolve itself into Committee, viz., that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee; and that it be an Instruction to the said Committee to consider and report whether the co-operation of women in certain matters of local government entrusted to county and borough councils might not be more effectively secured by methods other than that of election by the council as aldermen or by the ratepayers as councillors.

EARL CAWDOR: My Lords, by an unfortunate occurrence in dealing with this Bill on the last occasion I am afraid that most of the noble Lords who sit on this Bench are in the condition of exhausted volcanoes, and they have no further opportunity of addressing your Lordships. Therefore it is that I would ask the House to allow me to say a few words on our present position with regard to the Bill. Your Lordships will remember that on the last occasion the noble Earl the Lord President of the Council moved that the House be put into Committee, and that proposal was followed by the Amendment of my noble friend Lord Belper that the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee. Then, following upon that, came a suggestion from the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack to the effect that His Majesty's Government would be prepared to lay before your Lordships' House any information that they had which might be of value if the proceedings on the Bill an the debate that was then proceeding were postponed. Upon that, as your Lordships will remember, the debate was adjourned, and that is the position of affairs we have to meet to-day.

But we now have before us, of course, the Paper which was promised by His Majesty's Government showing, as regards England and Wales, the total number of members of boards of guardians, urban district councils, and rural district councils, and the number who are women, and so forth. I think there was a good deal more that it was suggested we, on this side of the House, would like to have had in the way of information, and I am not able, of course, to say for what reason it was impossible to provide that information. The noble Earl will remember the information that was asked for, and will doubtless be able to explain why more has not been afforded. This is not a very voluminous document to be produced after a fortnight. I should have thought that this information must have been in the pigeon-holes of the Department, and could have been produced without delay. But that is a point I do not wish to labour. I accept what we have, and will deal with it as far as I am concerned as it stands. This Paper does give us certain of the facts which my noble friend Lord Belper suggested would best be obtained by dealing with this Bill by a Select Committee in the first instance, but there certainly was a great deal more that my noble friend had in his mind—a great deal more as regards facts even, and certainly a great deal more as regards opinions and evidence. But at the present time we have the facts that are contained in this Paper, and to that extent, and to that extent alone, we have dealt with that part of the question which my noble friend suggested would best be dealt with by a Select Committee. It is quite true that if this Select Committee were now appointed, and were to take evidence and go into the question of the opinions of other persons and of local bodies as to these matters, the inquiries would take some time; and with regard to that I cannot forget the statement made by the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack when we were last discussing this Bill. The noble and learned Lord, after offering any information that His Majesty's Government possessed on the subject, said—

> "I would add that whatever the intention may be—and, of course, I give the credit of good intention to every Member of the House—the result of the Amendment, if carried, would inevitably be to destroy the Bill for this year,"

and my noble friend Lord St. Aldwyn, also speaking in that debate, said—

> "It seems to me that if we were to proceed with this matter to-night it is conceivable that that hope [the hope of dealing with this subject during the present session] might be disappointed."

Therefore we have from two strong authorities in this House the view expressed that if the Committee proposed to be set up by my noble friend Lord Belper were appointed, the result would probably be to destroy the Bill.

I do not think I am going too far when I say that there is a very general concurrence in the House upon two points—first, that it is very desirable indeed that we should enlist further than we do at present the valuable help and work of women on these local bodies; and, secondly, that it is very desirable that something should be done during this session, and by means of this Bill, in that direction. I think it would be a very deplorable thing if, after the discussions that have taken place here, and in view of that general concurrence, which I do not mean to exaggerate, and I do not think I have exaggerated, we should by the setting up of the Committee destroy this Bill. There is another question which I am bound to say also weighs with me not a little. In the course of the debate on the last occasion the noble Earl the Lord President of the Council said—

> "I think the noble Lord in moving this instruction has come very close indeed to, if he has not overpassed, the line of order."

The noble Earl was then speaking with the responsibility of the Leader of the House, and I think I shall not be wrong if I say that the noble and learned Earl Lord Halsbury who sits on the Bench behind me holds that view equally, if not even more strongly. I think we should all feel disinclined to proceed on those lines when the view has been expressed by two such high authorities that the action which was then proposed might be trenching upon, if not overpassing, the line of order.

As I have said, I think it would be a great evil if anything that we did in respect to the setting up of a Select Committee destroyed this Bill. If the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack and my noble friend Lord St. Aldwyn were correct nearly three weeks ago when they said that our action in setting up this Committee was likely to destroy the Bill, how much more certain is it that such action to-day or next week must imperil the measure? Under these circumstances I venture to suggest to my noble friend Lord Belper that he should consent to withdraw his Amendment, and that your Lordships should agree to go into Committee on the Bill. I believe that is the only way, assuming it to be correct that there is a danger in our setting up a Committee so far as the Bill itself is concerned, in which we can arrive at what I have already pointed out to your Lordships as, in my view, the general desire of the House on this subject.

One thing, of course, may be urged, and it was urged, I think, when we last dealt with this Bill by the noble and learned Lord Lord James of Hereford, namely, that noble Lords who had intended to vote against the Second Reading of this Bill supported the Second

Earl Cawdor.

Reading on the understanding that there was to be a proposal to set up a Select Committee; and the noble and learned Lord suggested that we should bear that in mind when we came to discuss the matter. I venture to put it to the House that noble Lords who are opposed to this Bill will be in no way injured by the suggestions I have made. Any one who feels strongly in opposition to the Bill can vote against going into Committee, and can afterwards amend the Bill, if it gets into Committee; or on Third Reading, if the Bill is not amended in the direction and to the extent which satisfies him, he can vote for its rejection. Therefore I do not think we can give much heed to the argument that by what is proposed now the position of any one who is really opposed in principle to the Bill as it stands is adversely affected. I trust that my noble friend Lord Belper will consent to withdraw his Amendment. In any case I am afraid that, as far as I personally am concerned, I should have to cast my vote against the proposal for a Select Committee and in favour of going into Committee on the Bill.

It may be said that if we were to go into Committee to-day, noble Lords who have strong feelings as to the desirability of modifying the Bill might be in a difficulty in regard to putting down Amendments, and I would therefore appeal to the noble Earl in charge of the Bill to consider that point, and possibly, if the course I suggest is taken and the House consents to be put into Committee on the Bill, some short adjournment might be made before the actual clauses were taken so as to enable any Amendments that might be put down to receive careful consideration. In conclusion, I have to ask my noble friend Lord Belper to consent to withdraw the Amendment he has placed on the Paper.

*LORD ZOUCHE OF HARYNGWORTH: My Lords, as I had not the opportunity of joining in the debate at the previous stage perhaps I may be allowed to say a few words now upon this important subject. The noble Earl who has just sat down made no reference to what perhaps I may be allowed to call the main point of my noble friend Lord Belper's Amendment, which was to ask the House to arrive, if they thought fit, at some other method of electing women to county and borough councils than that of direct election, namely, by co-optation. I am inclined to think that, although there may be some general consensus of opinion that it would be unwise to keep out women altogether from these authorities, it is open to very grave and serious doubt whether it would be advisable to rush into new legislation without very careful consideration on the lines of allowing them to stand and to compete in the same way as men do for seats upon these local authorities.

As we all know, the women who are already co-opted on committees of county councils have done good and useful work. There are several committees which obviously call for the assistance of women, and it would be, perhaps, a drawback not to have their counsel and advice; but that is a very different thing from saying, without very careful consideration indeed, that they should be upon exactly the same footing as men on these local bodies. The matter has received a good deal of attention out of doors. It was discussed some time ago by the council of the County Councils Association, of which I happen to be a member, and although no very definite conclusion was arrived at and there was no direct vote at that time, there certainly was not any general consensus of opinion in favour of admitting women to this qualification without entertaining the idea of co-optation.

Another important point which I think we ought to bear in mind is that as yet we have received no very decided and clear information from the county councils themselves as to what their opinion is on the subject. I believe there has been some difficulty, owing to dates, in the way of their being able to meet and discuss this question upon its merits and arrive at a definite conclusion; but I humbly submit that it would be very unwise to rush legislation through, if I may use the phrase, upon this extremely important subject without consulting the opinions of the very bodies in question. If you are to bring about a drastic reform in these local bodies it sounds to me but commonsense that you should as carefully as possible arrive at the opinions of these bodies themselves.

On the main question I would venture to point out that, supposing women were allowed by some method of co-optation instead of direct election to sit on these bodies, it would have a two-fold advantage. In the first place, you would be much more likely to secure a better class of woman in that way than by direct election, which might open the door to persons who were rather aiming at notoriety and the excitement of an election than to do good work; and, in the second place, it would be much better for women who wish to do this excellent work to be able to have a seat upon these committees and on various portions of the local bodies without having to go through the rough and tumble and turmoil of an election. Therefore, whatever the House may deem fit to do this evening, I would venture to ask your Lordships very seriously to consider this question as to whether it would not be better, if any reform is effected at all, to adopt in some form or other the principle of co-optation instead of resorting to direct election.

*THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Earl of CREWE): My Lords, I am not quite certain whether I am entitled to speak in this debate, but it is usual to extend to the Peer who happens to be in charge of a Bill that indulgence to which he is ordinarily entitled, in circumstances such as these. We are very much obliged to the noble Earl opposite for the exceedingly fair and moderate speech in which he has expressed his views on this question, and we sincerely hope that Lord Belper will agree to the suggestion thrown out by the noble Earl and allow the Bill to go to Committee. I may say at once that if that is done we should cheerfully fall in with the further suggestion of the noble Earl that we should not proceed to-day with the clauses of the Bill, because that obviously would be unfair to noble Lords who might desire to put down Amendments; and therefore we shall move that the House be immediately resumed if we are allowed to get the Bill into Committee.

I would only say one word about the Return to which the noble Earl alluded. It is quite true that the time which it has taken to prepare may seem out of proportion to its size, but we were asked to put the whole matter aside for a fortnight, and we thought ourselves bound, therefore, not to proceed with it before the lapse of that time, even though it might have been possible to produce the Paper some few days earlier. It is also quite true that the noble Marquess opposite, Lord Salisbury, desired that the Return should have been of a more extended character, and he was good enough to intimate to the Local Government Board what his views on that point were. I can assure him that my right hon. friend Mr. Burns has been very anxious to meet his views in every possible way, but we have taken up the ground, and it is one to which we are obliged to adhere, that in a matter of this sort it is not of any real service to collect mere evidence of opinion.

I think the noble Marquess suggested that all the chairmen of county councils might have been invited to express their opinion. I do not think that that would have been a very valuable collection of opinions in itself. It might have been of some value if the matter had been brought before each county council and discussed there, in which case I am pretty confident that there would have been a general disposition to support the Bill. But that would have been a matter of months. And I confess that our views of the merits of the case would not be modified by mere expression of opinion on the part of chairmen of county councils. The opinions of these gentlemen are, of course, entitled to respect. Some would have gone one way and some another, but I do not think those opinions would have been of material assistance to us in deciding whether the Bill ought to be proceeded with or not. Consequently we have confined ourselves to evidence of fact, upon which noble Lords can, of course, form an analogy, and from which they can draw any conclusion they please. I think it would not be any use for me to attempt an analysis of the Return at this stage. If that is necessary, it can be done on some Amendment in Committee. I therefore merely repeat that I hope the noble Lord will see his way to accept the suggestion of Lord Cawdor, and in that event I trust there is good prospect of the Bill becoming law during the present session of Parliament.

*LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: My Lords, I regret that I did not hear the statement which was made to the House earlier in this discussion by my noble friend Lord Cawdor. I was detained elsewhere. I wish to say that, as far as I am personally concerned, I do not intend to dwell on the necessity of a Select Committee. I gathered from the speech of my noble friend Lord Lansdowne on the last occasion that the sense of the House was directed against a Select Committee, and I think, therefore, the better course is to accept the line which I understand has been intimated by Lord Cawdor and allow the Bill, with the time for consideration that Lord Crewe has mentioned, to go into Committee. We will watch events in Committee, and those noble Lords who desire to do so can propose Amendments; and on the Third Reading after the Bill has left Committee we shall have an opportunity of saying what we may think appropriate on the Bill.

LORD BELPER: My Lords, I think it is within my privilege to reply on the debate, and it is also due to the House that I should say something upon the present position. I must say I feel very strongly that the House has put itself in an unfortunate position by the course pursued. My noble friend Lord Cawdor has alluded to the very small modicum of information which has been given us by the Government in a Paper with a very large and imposing title-page, and I cannot admit that the noble Earl the Lord President of the Council has given any answer to that complaint by saying he confined the information to questions of fact. There are questions of fact on which it is exceedingly desirable we should have an authoritative opinion, such as could be given by the Local Government Board, and some of those questions were set out in the Memorandum which was sent in to the Government.

I am rather surprised that the first official copy of this Paper, which is dated 28th June, was sent to me under cover by the President of the Local Government Board yesterday evening—that is to say, on 3rd July. It is perfectly obvious that this information, even if it took nearly a fortnight to collect, could have been printed the day after the date which is placed on the Paper itself; and one would have thought, that when, with the authority of the noble and learned Lord who sits on the Woolsack, we were promised all the information that was available at the Local Government Board, and also the answers to questions which we might like to ask, the information, a small modicum of which is contained in this Paper, would have been placed in your Lordships' hands as soon as possible. Even now the Paper has not been distributed to all your Lordships. I venture to think that if the Government were as anxious as they professed to be to give information they would have taken care that what information they gave should be in the hands of your Lordships at the earliest possible date.

With regard to this Paper, I should like to make one or two remarks. No doubt the information, though small in amount, is very important from a particular point of view. The first part of the statement gives the number of women who have seats upon boards of guardians, rural district councils, and urban district councils. On boards of guardians, as we all believed would be the case, there are a considerable number of women taking a useful part in the work; but when we come to rural district councils the number is very small. Out of a total number of 656 rural district councils, there are only 108 on which women sit; and the total number of women who have seats on these authorities is 146—or something like one in five of the total number of authorities. When we come, however, to the most important of these three authorities—urban district councils—the result is truly surprising, if not almost ludicrous. Urban district councils are the authorities which have to deal with similar work to that of the borough councils; in many cases they are bodies of great importance, representing a very large population, and they discharge those very duties which, in the petition that was sent to the Prime Minister, the ladies expressed themselves as anxious to take part in.

What is the case in regard to urban district councils? Out of a total of 812 throughout the whole of England, there are only two district councils with women representatives upon them, and in each case there is only one woman member. Therefore, in regard to these particular bodies which deal with matters suitable for women to take part in, only two women throughout the whole of England have taken the trouble to seek, or, at all events, have been successful in obtaining, seats on those councils. If any statement were necessary to confirm what I said in moving that this matter should be referred to a Select Committee I do not think there could be any more pregnant statement than that. If we had had a Select Committee we might have discovered the reasons which prevent women securing seats on these councils.

Then there is a statement in regard to the number of women who have seats on the education committees of county and borough councils. That is a piece of information which is strictly bounded by Statute and by the schemes drawn up under the Education Act. What we were anxious to get was, not only the number of women who have, under statutory powers, seats on present education authorities, but what was the number of women who sought and obtained seats on the old school boards, because they wished to take part in educational matters. If we had had that information it would have been some guide as to the keenness which women had shown in attempting to get seats on educational bodies.

I should like to call attention to one piece of information which we asked for, and which the Local Government Board could have given themselves if they had devoted half-an-hour's attention to the matter. The statement has frequently been made that if you co-opt women they have no opportunity of defending before the full council the policy which they advocate if the council takes objection to the work of the committee. I pointed out that as far as county councils were concerned there were only two important committees on which the work of women would be desirable—I was going to say almost necessary. Those two committees are the Health Committee with regard to midwives, and the Asylums Committee with regard to lunatics. I asked for information as to what were the powers of an Asylums Committee with regard to their work compared with those of the other committees appointed by the county councils. I could have answered that question myself. The answer is that the Asylums Committee have almost independent powers. They need not even make a quarterly Report to the county council, the money they spend is within their own control, and the county council have no purview over it, so to speak, except that they elect the members of the committee, and therefore can alter its constitution if they are dissatisfied with the way the work is being done. But, practically, this committee is an independent committee.

What I complain of is that we have no guidance or information from the Local Government Board with regard to these matters. We have a right to expect that the Government, when they bring in a Bill and recommend it to the House, should give us the information which is in their possession as to the facts and the practice of these different committees. If the Local Government Board had given a Memorandum of the kind that was asked for it would have cleaed up these points authoritatively, and thrown some valuable light on many of the remarks which have been made with regard to this Bill. We should have liked very much, as the noble Earl said, to have obtained the opinion of the county councils, but that unfortunately within the time at disposal would have been impossible, because many of the county councils do not meet until late in July; but, failing that, my noble friend Lord Salisbury, who discussed the matter with me, thought it might throw some light on the question if we could get the opinion of the chairmen of county councils and the chairmen of the education committees, who are probably the two people who can speak with most authority on this matter. I do not wish to labour that point, but I do say that we are somewhat disappointed, after we had adjourned the debate owing to an offer that was made by the Government that they would give us all the information at their disposal, that no attempt should have been made to give us information which was available at the Local Government Board and which would have been of great assistance to us in coming to a decision on many of the subjects which have been discussed.

It has been said that the appointment of a Select Committee would kill the Bill. It could only be killed if the Government withdrew the Bill in consequence of its being referred to a Select Committee, or in consequence of their not being satisfied with the decision to which the Committee came; but, as far as I was concerned, I certainly had no intention or wish, in moving for this Committee, to kill the Bill. My object was to get the necessary information and evidence to enable the House to come to a right decision on the question. I pointed out that in my opinion there were other ways in which we might secure the valuable assistance of women on these bodies, and that very few of the ladies whose services we wished to have would take part in contested elections. Whatever decision the Committee might have come to on the facts before them, I should have been perfectly willing to accept that decision whether it had been in favour of the Bill or in favour of the course I suggested.

It only remains for me now to state the view I take of our present position. Unsatisfactory as, in my opinion, has been the course pursued—and I am sure it will not be adopted as a precedent in the future—I recognise that the position is very different to-day from what it was three weeks ago. I am very much inclined to agree with a large part of what my noble friend Lord Cawdor said, and it was not even necessary that I should listen to his remarks to feel that if we pressed the Amendment referring the Bill to a Select Committee, we should be laying ourselves open to the charge of wishing to kill the Bill. I still feel that the appointment of a Committee would have been the best course to pursue. I believe that in that way we should have got at what we wanted—namely, the real facts of the case. But under the present circumstances, and knowing what the general feeling of the House is upon the matter, I think it will be meeting the views of your Lordships if I withdraw the Amendment, which I now beg to do.

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

House in Committee (according to Order.)

[The Earl of ONSLOW in the Chair.]

THE EARL OF CREWE: I beg to move that the House do resume.

Moved, "That the House do resume."—(*The Earl of Crewe.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

STATE OF THE NAVY.

EARL CAWDOR: My Lords, I rise to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty (1) What is the prescribed strength of the Channel Fleet in battleships and cruisers, and what is its actual strength at the present date; (2) What battleships and cruisers belonging to this Fleet are now undergoing repairs; at what place or places are such repairs being carried out; and by what ships are those undergoing repairs replaced; (3) Are the vessels replacing ships, now under repair, fully manned; (4) What training, if any, in night practice, is being given to destroyers and torpedo boats which are attached to the Nore Division; (5) Are ships manned with nucleus crews given night practice; (6) What is the number of destroyers in the Channel and Home Fleets, and in the Home Ports—(*a*) In full commission, (*b*) With nucleus crews, (*c*) Under repair or laid up, and what is the number available for sea in twenty-four or forty-eight hours in (*a*), (*b*), and (*c*) respectively; and to ask for Papers.

In putting these questions to the noble Lord I do not think I need assure your Lordships that I do so in no hostile or critical sense whatever. The defences of this country and the efficiency of the Navy are interests far too great, to my mind, to be the playthings of Party; and in so far as I am able it will certainly always be my endeavour to keep them absolutely free from anything of the kind. But, my Lords, there has been much—shall I say?—wild statement as to what are said to be the facts with regard to the present condition of the

Navy. I refer to statements not alone in newspapers, because, with all my great respect for the Press, I should not, merely on newspaper articles, think it necessary to raise any question as a rule in your Lordships' House. But the remarks to which I refer have gone a good deal further than that. Rumours have been put about with respect to the want of repair of the Fleet, the small numbers of the Channel Fleet as it exists at present compared to what is its prescribed strength, and with regard to other matters of the same kind, emanating from quarters which ought to know the facts.

There are other Questions besides those on the Paper which I should like to have addressed to the noble Lord, but I feel that I have already pressed him upon them and I accept the Answers he has given. I pressed the noble Lord not very long ago on the question of repairs. The noble Lord gave me a perfectly straight Answer, namely, that in his opinion the vessels were being kept in a proper and sufficient state of repair, and that the staff in all the dockyards in this country and abroad were in a condition to maintain those repairs at a proper standard. I cannot continue asking the noble Lord Questions of that kind, because I accept his statements when he makes them. There is another Question which I have not put on the Paper, and I will tell your Lordships why. For some reason which I cannot explain, the perpetual statement seems to be made that the Fleet at the Nore is nothing but a Fleet in reserve. The Fleet at the Nore, as I understand it, is made up at the moment of six battleships, two having been withdrawn from each of the three Fleets—the Channel Fleet, the Mediterranean Fleet, and the Atlantic Fleet—and six first-class cruisers also withdrawn from those Fleets; and we have had the assurance more than once in the noble Lord's Memorandum on the Navy Estimates and from himself personally in this House that the intention of His Majesty's Government is to maintain those twelve vessels in full commission and absolutely efficient as a foremost fighting Fleet. But it does not seem to matter what is said. Certain persons continue to assert that the Fleet at the Nore is nothing but a Fleet in reserve. I take upon myself the responsibility of not asking the noble Lord that Question again, because I accept the statement he has made that the Fleet at the Nore is in an efficient state, that it is fully manned, and that it is in the front rank of our fighting Fleets. Of course, the noble Lord will correct me if I am not quoting him correctly.

I think the time has come when it is very undesirable that so many statements of the nature I have referred to should be made without being authoritatively contradicted. It is very easy to say sometimes that these rumours do not harm, but if persisted in they create a certain amount of unrest in the public mind. I merely say these few words because I wish to tempt the noble Lord, if I can, to state to your Lordships as clearly and as definitely as possible what is the real and actual position of the Channel Fleet, and, if he will, of the Home Fleet as well; and if the noble Lord will unburden himself on the subject he will not only be satisfying your Lordships but will also be removing a feeling of uneasiness which I am afraid is beginning to permeate all classes in this country. I have asked for Papers. I do not know whether any of the matters I have referred to are matters on which the noble Lord can lay Papers. If so, it would be satisfactory that we should have the information in black and white. I therefore beg to put the Questions which stand in my name, and to ask whether any Papers on the subject can be laid on the Table.

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord TWEEDMOUTH): My Lords, I have to thank my noble friend for putting these Questions on the Paper, because the somewhat elastic procedure of this House enables me, if the House will allow me, not to confine myself to the Questions on the Paper, but to go rather into the general question of the position of the Navy. We do not desire to keep anything back from the House or from the country, but I wish to maintain a certain amount of reserve. I do think there are circumstances connected with the Fleet, and the policy with regard to the Fleet, which it is not desirable to announce too publicly. I will give as full information as I can, and I will further pledge myself that such things as I think it undesirable to state publicly I will at any rate offer to communicate to the noble Earl who has raised this question, to the noble Marquess the Leader of the Opposition in this House, and to the right hon. Gentleman who leads the Opposition in the other House.

Now Lord Cawdor has referred to—shall I call it ?—the mosquito campaign which has been carried on in the Press and other quarters against the Admiralty and their policy, and the new arrangements with regard to the Fleet. During my public life I have been brought a good deal into contact with the Press and I know what "good copy" means. But I think those who search for good copy do not always found that copy on actually ascertained facts. I attribute no *mala fides*, but I think a great many of these attacks have a very ill-informed foundation. I do not want to fall into a difference with the Press in this matter, but a great many of these statements are a good deal like sheet lightning, which after a certain amount of illumination passes away leaving greater darkness than before. But I do resent and protest against some of these statements being re-echoed by officers retired, and, I am afraid, sometimes also by officers on active service. I think that is contrary to the good discipline of the service. I am sure these officers would feel aggrieved if officers who serve under them had been lacking in that self-control which they have recently, some of them, exhibited.

What are the points that are raised against us ? This sort of argument has been put forward. The Empire is in jeopardy ; we are living over a live mine ; we are sitting on a volcano. These are very vivid descriptions, no doubt, but I think they rest on assumptions which cannot be maintained. The people who put forward this sort of attack assume that the whole lessons of history are forgotten or rejected. For, my Lords, the history of the British Navy is of great antiquity ; it goes back to the earliest times of our country. It is true that the Navy has had in its time its heavy knocks, its defeats, its disasters ; yet, my Lords, I say with confidence that in the end the British Navy has always been successful, it has always come out top dog in the fight ; and I think we may trust the sea dogs of the present to give just as good an account of themselves as their predecessors have done in the past. Then it is said that the Home Fleet is a fraud on the public and a danger to the Empire. It is said we have now an emasculated Channel Fleet. I will deal with these two points a little later on.

Then, my Lords, it is said that the Sea Lords of the Admiralty are the subservient servants of a time-serving and parsimonious Government. I protest against such statements. There is no foundation for them. I can assure your Lordships that the whole of the Board of Admiralty, whether they be civilians or naval men, the moment they enter the Admiralty doors drop all questions of Party and devote themselves entirely to the advantage of the Navy and the safety of the Empire. How is the present Board of Admiralty constituted ? I leave on one side my civil colleagues and myself. There are four Sea Lords. There is, in the first place, the First Sea Lord, Sir John Fisher ; and nobody, at any rate, whatever fault they may find with him, can say he is a man with no power of asserting himself, or one who has not done great service to the country and to the British Navy. The Second Sea Lord is Sir William May, a man known to the whole world to have done admirable work at the Admiralty, and to have distinguished himself in every command which he has held. I have a third colleague, Sir Henry Jackson, a Fellow of the Royal Society, a man of great scientific attainments, the greatest expert there is in wireless telegraphy. The Fourth Sea Lord is Admiral Winsloe, a man who has shown the greatest capacity in command, and in service generally. I hold that if these charges against them and against their civilian colleagues were to be maintained, we should be driven out of office ; we should be hanged as high as Haman, if we left our responsibilities unfulfilled. I can assure you that no pressure is brought on the Admiralty Board, and that if such pressure were attempted the Board would not stand any such dictation.

There are three points you should carefully remember. In the first place the distribution of ships must be under the control of the Admiralty Board, because the wants of the country change from time to time. The conditions as between ourselves and other Powers are constantly changing, and you want so to distribute your force from time to time as will make you as safe as possible, and ready to meet any emergency. Therefore I contend there must be no idea of finality with regard to the distribution of ships. The distribution of ships must go on changing from time to time according to the requirements of the moment; and to fix a particular fleet at a particular number for all time is making a great mistake, and not making a proper use of the forces at your disposal.

As regards the Home Fleet, about which so much has been said, it must be remembered that it is in process of development. I do not pretend that it is now complete; I do not pretend to prophesy in what position that Fleet may be in eighteen months' or two years' time.

There is still a third thing that I think should also be carefully remembered and considered. That is the geographical position which this country possesses, and also the position that it has, not merely by the situation of the British Isles, but by its possessions in all parts of the world. We lie across the chief courses of all European commerce by the position of our island at the issues of the Atlantic Ocean. We hold also the Straits of Gibraltar, the mouth of the Mediterranean, and then we hold Malta, Aden, Bombay, Colombo, Singapore, and Hong-Kong. Then there is the Cape and Bermuda, and a number of harbours in our Colonies. In the future these Colonies can be of the greatest service to the British Navy. They can be of service by increasing their harbours, improving the docks and coaling facilities, perhaps by themselves starting flotillas of the smaller ships such as submarine destroyers. You cannot carry the smaller vessels which are the fringe and accompaniment of a fleet with you across the ocean. I believe if the time of danger came when you had to send a great war fleet across the ocean, it would be of enormous service to the fleet to find there the small flotillas which are so important for naval operations.

I will bring before you what I think a very faithful representation of the strength of the Fleet as it now is. The figures are not exactly the same perhaps as in the Dilke Return, but I will try to explain in what small particulars they differ. I do not propose to make any comparison between either the various Powers severally as against England or any combination of Powers against this country. I am going to give you very shortly what seems to me to represent the full present strength of the five great naval Powers of the world. The list was made out for 1st June, 1907. On that date Great Britain had fifty-seven battleships of less than twenty-five years old. In the Dilke Return I think the number is sixty, but I take out the "Edinburgh," the "Thunderer," and the "Devastation," because of their age. These fifty-seven vessels also include eighteen vessels that are of a more or less obsolescent type. That leaves thirty-nine first-class battleships for Great Britain. The United States has twenty-two battleships less than twenty-five years old, and of these four belong to the obsolescent class, leaving eighteen. Germany has twenty battleships, of which nine are obsolescent, leaving eleven. France has twenty-one battleships, from which I deduct seven obsolescent vessels and the "Iéna," which I do not think can be used again, leaving thirteen. Japan has eleven vessels, of which two are obsolescent, leaving nine. Therefore, so far as battleships of the first and important class are concerned, Great Britain has thirty-nine, the United States eighteen, France thirteen, Germany eleven, and Japan nine.

Taking armoured cruisers of twenty years old and less, I find that Great Britain has thirty-two, the United States twelve, France eighteen, Germany six, Japan ten. I am not going to compare the ships of the various fleets against one another. This I do say, however, that it seems to me that those who choose to go into this subject and see what the comparative value of the ships is, will undoubtedly be convinced that, whether it is a question of size, speed, armament, or armour, British ships will show up extremely well against the ships of any other country in the world. That is rather a striking and, I believe, an accurate account of the various fleets as they stand at the present moment.

I now come to the Questions put to me by Lord Cawdor. The first Question is: What is the prescribed strength of the Channel Fleet in battleships and cruisers, and what is its actual strength at the present date? The prescribed strength of the Channel Fleet at this moment is fourteen battleships, consisting of eight "King Edwards," the "Triumph" and the "Swiftsure," then the "Ocean" and the "Vengeance" of the "Canopus" class, and, lastly, the "Jupiter" and "Illustrious" of the "Majestic" class. These last six vessels will, I think, in a reasonable time be changed for a wholly homogeneous class. The battleship strength will be greater eventually than it is at present.

What I should like to point out is this, that, though it is true that the number of battleships in the Channel Fleet at this moment is less than it was in Sir Arthur Wilson's time, yet the general strength of the squadron of battleships is, I think, greater now than ever it was, because the eight ships of the "King Edward VII." class outshine anything that was ever brought together before, and those eight ships at this moment entirely surpass the ships to be found in any other fleet in the world. I think that when the other six ships are made up into a homogeneous group you will find that the battleship portion of the Channel Fleet is a force which cannot be met by any other fleet in the world—I doubt even whether by any combination of fleets. Then there are attached to the Channel Fleet the four armoured cruisers that constitute the First Cruiser Squadron. There are three protected cruisers, a repair ship, and a despatch vessel. The next Question asked is, What battleships and cruisers of this fleet are undergoing repairs?

EARL CAWDOR: I asked for the prescribed strength of the Channel Fleet and its actual strength at the present date.

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH: I am coming to that. The Channel Fleet at the present time is short of two battleships, which are undergoing their annual refit, and the First Cruiser Squadron has been away in American waters. But since 24th June a number of fully-manned ships of the Home Fleet have been temporarily placed under the orders of the Commander-in-Chief of the Channel Fleet. At the present time these vessels are six armoured cruisers of the first type, which constitute a fifth new squadron, three scouts, one destroyer depot ship, and thirty-seven destroyers. These ships are under the command of the Commander-in-Chief of the Channel Fleet up till 10th July, and he is now carrying on a cruise and manœuvres with all these ships. The First Cruiser Squadron, which has been away during the last few months in America, has returned to-day to these waters.

I am next asked: At what place or places are the repairs being carried out? Two battleships, the "New Zealand" and the "Triumph," and the protected cruiser "Juno" are undergoing repair, the "New Zealand" at Devonport and the "Triumph" and "Juno" at Chatham. The "Juno" is under repair on an extensive scale, which amounts to more than the annual refit, and so she has been replaced in the Fleet temporarily by the "Gladiator." The "New Zealand" and "Triumph" have not yet been replaced, because they are only undergoing the usual annual refit, and as soon as that is complete they will rejoin the Fleet.

Then I am asked: Are the vessels replacing ships now under repair fully manned? The "Gladiator" is fully manned. Then it is asked: What training, if any, in night practice is being given to destroyers and torpedo-boats which are attached to the Nore Division? I suppose that by destroyers and torpedo-boats attached to the Nore Division the noble Lord refers to the flotilla under the immediate orders of the Torpedo Commodore in the Home Fleet. This flotilla consists, apart from the attendant scouts and depot ship, entirely of fully-manned destroyers, usually twenty-four in number. No torpedo-boats are attached to this flotilla. This flotilla has constant and systematic night training, with and without lights. The ships manned with nucleus crews are given night practice.

I am further asked: What is the number of destroyers in the Channel and Home Fleets, and in the Home Ports (*a*) in full commission; (*b*) with nucleus crews; and (*c*) under repair or laid up; and what is the number available for sea in twenty-four or forty-eight hours in (*a*), (*b*), and (*c*), respectively? I am afraid that in regard to a portion of that question the answer is one which I would rather not give to the House, though I am quite ready to give it to the noble Lord privately. My answer to the rest of the question is this—that 123 destroyers are in home waters, and belong to the Home Fleet; but, when required, the destroyers are detached for service with the Channel Fleet. At present there are seventy destroyers in commission with full crews; thirty-seven are attached to and are cruising with the Channel Fleet, fifteen are attached to the Home Fleet under the immediate orders of the Torpedo Commodore, ten are attached to the Home Fleet and employed on duties with the gunnery and torpedo establishments and on experimental duties and eight are in Home Ports. Of the remaining fifty-three destroyers, all have nucleus crews except three that are in dockyard hands.

The question has been raised more than once—What proof is there that the ships of the Home Fleet are ready for sea and are properly trained? I have only this morning received a gunnery return which, I think, does no small credit to the Home Fleet as a whole—that is, including the reserve vessels with the Nore Division. We all know that the weather latterly has been extraordinarily unfavourable for shooting, as well as for human beings, and these tests this year have been carried on under quite exceptionally difficult circumstances. In spite of this and all other drawbacks, the Home Fleet occupies third place in the whole six principal fleets from which we have returns. I can give the House the actual order of merit, which is—(1) the Mediterranean Fleet, (2) the Altantic Fleet, (3) the Home Fleet, (4) the Australian Squadron, (5) the Channel Fleet, (6) the Third Cruiser Squadron. I may say that this order of merit is based on an official scale of points which takes into consideration both the accuracy and rapidity of firing. I think that is a very creditable place to have been taken by the fleet at the Nore, with the reserve ships, which I have included; and I think it should go far to assure the House that the Home Fleet really is in its present undeveloped condition a very formidable force, and one which will be able to give of itself a very good account, if it is called upon, in time of war. I hope that I have been able to give the information that I promised, and I hope that noble Lords will consider that, after all, we have a very good defence to make of the present efficiency of His Majesty's Navy, and that the Board of which I have the honour to be the head is really active in promoting the best interests of the service.

*LORD BRASSEY: My Lords, before this discussion closes I desire to make a suggestion arising out of the decision recently taken to offer His Majesty's ship "Collingwood" for sale. I do not question the discretion of the Admiralty in regard to the sale of the "Collingwood." The list of battleships named in the Dilke Return includes, however, five ships of similar type and approximately even date to the "Collingwood," and three other ships of approximately the same date as the "Thunderer" class. I desire to express most earnestly the hope that those ships may not share the fate of the "Collingwood." I would strongly urge that all of those ships, or, at all events, some of them, may, when the time comes to pay them out of commission or otherwise to deal with them, be placed in Australian harbours. In those distant waters the ironclads of an older day would, I am convinced, be found extremely valuable both for the training of the Colonial Naval Reserve and also in an emergency for harbour defence.

EARL CAWDOR: My Lords, I should like to tender my thanks to the First Lord for the courtesy and fulness of his reply. I hope that what he has said may tend to do away with many of the rumours to which I have referred, and to create confidence. In regard to the shortage of the Channel Fleet in battleships, can the noble Lord tell the House how long the strength has been twelve instead of fourteen, and whether that is the outside shortage that there has been in the fleet in recent months? In the event of two battleships allocated to the Channel Fleet undergoing considerable repairs at any time, their place, I take it, would be taken by other vessels. I presume that it is only in the case of shorter repairs that they would not be replaced.

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH: There are two different classes of repairs. One is the annual refit, and that is the case of the two ships I have mentioned. Then there are times when vessels have to undergo considerable repair, and then the ships would be replaced.

EARL CAWDOR: With regard to the question of Papers, the noble Lord has given the House some extremely interesting figures with respect to the proportionate strength of the fleets of Great Britain, the United States, Germany, France, and Japan. I do not know whether he would consider it desirable that they should be issued in a Paper. The figures are of considerable value, and they appear to me to be a slight modification of the Dilke Return.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: Very little.

EARL CAWDOR: I again thank the noble Lord for the statement he has made.

House adjourned at Six o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 4th July, 1907.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.:—Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No. 2) Bill [Lords].

Ordered, that the Bill be read a second time to-morrow.

Southend Water Bill [Lords]; Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed with Amendments.

North British Railway Bill [Lords] (by Order). Read a second time, and committed.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill (by Order). Read the third time, and passed.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time to-morrow.

Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Surrey, etc.) Bill [Lords]. Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time to-morrow.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill [Lords]. Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time to-morrow.

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill [Lords]. Reported without Amendment [Provisional Order confirmed] Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time to-morrow.

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 4) Bill [Lords]. Reported, without

Amendment [Provisional Order confirmed]: Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time to-morrow.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill. Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time to-morrow.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill. Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill, as amended, to be considered to-morrow.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 12) Bill. Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill, as amended, to be considered to-morrow.

Local Government Provisional Order (No. 15) Bill. Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Order confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill, as amended, to be considered to-morrow.

Ashton-under-Lyne, Stalybridge, and Dukinfield (District) Waterworks Bill [Lords]. Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Pontypridd Urban District Council Bill [Lords]. Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Bill to be read the third time.

United Methodist Church Bill [Lords]. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 241.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Select Committee to be printed. [No. 241.]

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to prohibit Joint Stock Companies from acting as Physicians, Surgeons, or Medical Practitioners." [Prohibition of Medical Practice by Companies Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confirm a Provisional Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Dundee Corporation." [Dundee Corporation Order Confirmation Bill [Lords.]

Dundee Corporation Order Confirmation Bill [Lords.] Read the first time; and ordered, under Section 9 of The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 266.]

PETITIONS.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC (LOCAL OPTION) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Glasgow, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petition from Dulwich, against; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC HEALTH (REGULATIONS AS TO FOOD) BILL.

Petition from Inverness, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SMALL LANDHOLDERS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Peebleshire, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

WEEKLY REST-DAY BILL.

Petition from Harringay and other places, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

MINT.

Copy presented, of Thirty-seventh Annual Report of the Deputy-Master and Comptroller of the Mint, 1906 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies Presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3848 to 3851 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

GAS AND WATER WORKS FACILITIES ACT, 1870.

Copy presented, of Report by the Board of Trade as to dispensing with the consent of the Nazeing parish council in the case of the Herts and Essex Water Provisional Order [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 239.]

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Copy presented, of Regulations for the Training of Teachers and for the Examination of Students in Training Colleges [by Command]: to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Female Workers in the Post Office.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): To ask the Postmaster-General if he is aware that the departmental witnesses informed the Select Committee of this House that the proportion of female to male staff was not more than one in three at the smaller offices; and can he say why this proportion is greatly exceeded at many offices and the male staff compelled to perform such an amount of night and split duties as will prove prejudicial to their health.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) There has evidently been some misapprehension in regard to this matter. The answer given before the Select Committee did not imply that the proportion of female to male staff at any particular office should not exceed one in three. The number of women to be employed at any given office must depend on the special circumstances in each case. The statement that the female staff generally is not more than one in three is only roughly correct. In March, 1906, there were in the provinces 13,433 male sorting clerks and telegraphists as against 5,000 females.

Queen's Barracks, Perth.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrews Burghs): To ask the Secretary of State for War what steps, if any, have been taken to provide reasonable accommodation in the sergeants' mess at Queen's Barracks, Perth, in view of the fact that there is scarcely standing room when the mess is used by Volunteer sergeant instructors, Militia permanent staff sergeants, and depot sergeants.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Sanction was given in February last for the provision of an additional room of 504 feet superficial area.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the official reports show the officers' quarters at Queen's Barracks, Perth, to be satisfactory; whether representations have been made as to the necessity of extensive repairs; and, if so, when were such representations made.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether there is a corporals' room in Queen's Barracks, Perth; and whether the corporals in Queen's Barracks, Perth, at present mess with the privates.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) I will answer these two Questions together. No representations have been made as to the necessity of extensive repairs to these officers' quarters at Perth. The repainting of the quarters was the only service specifically referred to the War Office for execution during the present year, and funds are available for that purpose. There is a corporals' room in connection with the canteen at Perth, but the corporals and privates mess together, as is not unusual in the service.

Maryhill Barracks.

MR. COCHRANE (Ayrshire, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he has now decided whether cavalry will be sent to Maryhill Barracks after the Scots Greys have left Scotland.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) It is not intended to quarter a cavalry regiment at Maryhill Barracks after the Royal Scots Greys have left Scotland.

Unclaimed Moneys in the Court of Chancery.

MR. PARKER (Halifax): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury what was the amount of unclaimed money held by the Court of Chancery twenty years ago; what amounts have been paid to claimants during the past twenty years; and what amount has been appropriated by the State during this period.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) The subjoined statement shows the position of the dormant funds in Court at triennial periods since 1884. It should, however, be borne in mind that "dormant funds" do not necessarily represent "unclaimed money." No amount has been appropriated to the State from these funds during that period.

Dormant funds * in Court on 1st September of years named.					Funds paid out.†		
Date.	Number of separate accounts.	Cash.	Securities.	Nominal total.	Number of separate accounts.	Cash.	Securities.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£	£
1884	2,969	462,992 10 3	432,139 14 8	895,132 4 11	459	40,500	75,300
1887	2,978	496,652 19 0	522,305 1 4	1,018,958 0 4	292	42,500	106,300
1890	3,126	517,487 7 6	583,711 1 2	1,101,198 8 8	353	68,800	100,100
1893	3,151	492,953 7 11	659,131 12 8	1,152,085 0 7	377	48,300	196,000
1896	3,148	482,410 6 9	606,432 15 2	1,088,843 1 11	381	56,200	154,600
1899	3,238	460,915 8 11	593,024 0 7	1,053,939 9 6	333	39,600	135,600
1902	3,261	455,893 15 6	592,842 7 5	1,048,736 2 11	229	29,200	107,450
1905	3,353	453,876 6 7	502,588 6 2	956,464 12 9	—	—	—
						325,100	875,350
							325,100
					Grand	total . .	1,200,450

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* A dormant fund is "an account in the books of the Pay Office to the credit of which there stood" on the dates named "any sums not less than £50, which have not been dealt with, otherwise than by the continuous investment or placing on deposits of dividends, during the fifteen years immediately preceding the said dates" (Rule 101, Supreme Court Funds Rules, 1905).

† These amounts are calculated triennially, on the preparation of a new list of dormant funds, as being paid out of the accounts in the preceding list.

Unclaimed Dividends.

MR. PARKER: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury what was the amount of the unclaimed dividends and other unclaimed moneys in the Bank of England twenty years ago; what amounts, if any, have been appropriated by the State during that period; and what amounts have been paid to claimants during the same period.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) Under the provisions of The National Debt Act, 1870, Government Stock on which the dividends have remained unclaimed for ten years is transferred by the Bank of England or the Bank of Ireland, as the case may be, to the National Debt Commissioners. The dividends on the stock, so long as it remains unclaimed, are paid by the Banks to those Commissioners. Similarly, unclaimed dividends, as distinguished from the dividends on unclaimed stock, are paid over by the Banks to the National Debt Commissioners. The amount of unclaimed stock remaining in the names of the National Debt Commissioners on the 31st March, 1887, was £833,111 15s. 2d. and the amount of unclaimed dividends was £1,309,580 17s. 2d. Since that date the transfers of unclaimed stock to the Commissioners have amounted to £345,580 7s. 6d., and of unclaimed dividends (including dividends on unclaimed stock) to £621,815 4s. 5d. In the same period stock to the amount of £233,144 7s. 10d. and dividends to the amount of £142,777 6s. 7d. have been retransferred to claimants. Under Section 10 of The Finance Act, 1904, a sum of £1,000,000, being part of the fund held by the National Debt Commissioners against their liability in respect of unclaimed dividends, was paid to the Exchequer. It will be seen that no unclaimed Government stocks or dividends are held by the Bank of England except those which have been less than ten years unclaimed, and it is not until the period of ten years have elapsed that they become technically "unclaimed." I have no information as to other unclaimed money in the possession of the Bank.

Ailsa Craig.

MR. J. D. WHITE (Dumbartonshire): To ask the Secretary for Scotland what was taken as the annual value for rating of Ailsa Craig in 1883 when a portion of it was purchased by the Northern Lights Commissioners from the Marquess of Ailsa for £1,550; and what are at present taken as the annual values for rating of that portion and of the rest of the island.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) In 1883 the yearly value in the Valuation Roll was £30. For the current year the Northern Lights Commissioners' property is valued at £100, and the rest of the island at £30.

Bass Rock.

MR. J. D. WHITE: To ask the Secretary for Scotland what was taken as the annual value for rating of the Bass Rock in 1900, when it was feued by the Northern Lights Commissioners from Sir Walter Dalrymple at an annual feu duty of £40; and what are at present taken as the annual values for rating of that portion and of the rest of the Bass Rock.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) In 1900 the Bass Rock was included in a tenancy with house and land at Canty Bay, the whole being rated at £31. For the current year these holdings are entered at the same figure.

Hyskeir Rock.

MR. J. D. WHITE: To ask the Secretary for Scotland what was taken as the annual value for rating of Hyskeir Rock in 1902, when it was purchased by the Northern Lights Commissioners from Mr. Robert Thom for £611 3s. 3d.; how far is it from the nearest inhabited island; what is approximately its area; what is the character of the soil; whether it has any fresh water; and whether it has been used for human habitation or any other purpose.

*(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) In 1902 Hyskeir Rock formed part of the estate of Canna, the valuation of which was not reduced by the sale in that year. The rock is about ten miles from Canna, it has an approximate area of fifty acres, eighteen acres of which is grazing ground, the rest rock and shingle, it has no fresh water, and is uninhabited.

Templemore Artillery Depot.

MR. GUY BARING (Winchester): To ask the Secretary of State for War when the new artillery depot at Templemore will be completed; and what will be the total cost involved by its removal from Clonmel.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) It is impossible, at present, to say when the depot will be completed, as the necessary reappropriations at Templemore to adapt the barracks for use as a depot for Royal Field Artillery are not finally settled, and I am not yet in a position to say what the total cost involved in the removal from Clonmel will be.

Agricultural Organisation Society.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, College): To ask the Secretary for Scotland whether his attention has been called to the fact that the recent Committee on Small Holdings recommended that an annual grant should be made by the Board of Agriculture to the Agricultural Organisation Society, which is a propagandist society dependent upon voluntary subscriptions, yet doing national work; whether he has yet been able to carry out this recommendation; and, if not, can he promise such a grant for the ensuing year.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) Perhaps I may be allowed to Answer this Question. We are aware of the recommendation of the Committee on Small Holdings to which my hon. friend refers, and we have received an application for a grant from the Agricultural Organisation Society, which is under consideration. There is, however, no prospect of our finding ourselves in a position to make a grant during the present financial year.

Terminable Annuities.

MR. MYER (Lambeth, N.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will give particulars of all cases of terminable annuities created since 1861, the terms of years of which annuities, as originally fixed, have been subsequently extended; and will he state what amounts have from time to time been applied to the reduction of the deficiency in the trustees savings banks and friendly societies, how the fact of the deficiency was established, and what is its present amount.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) Particulars of Annuities created since 1861, of which the terms of years as originally fixed have been subsequently extended. 1. The following annuities which were to have expired in 1885 were, under Section 5 of The National Debt Act, 1883, converted into a twenty years annuity of £684,022:—

Annuities exchanged.

	£.	s.	d.
1. Annuities created for fortifications under 23 and 24 Vic., c. 109, and subsequent Acts -	588,003	11	6
2. Annuities created for localisation of the military forces under 35 and 36 Vic., c. 68 - -	378,831	0	0
3. Annuities created, in lieu of stock held on account of savings banks, under 29 Vic., c. 5, and 32 and 33 Vic., c. 59 - -	3,617,845	0	0
4. Portion of annuities created under National Debt Act, 1880, 43 Vic., c. 15 - - -	550,583	0	0
	5,135,262	11	6

2. Annuities amounting to £3,600,000 created under Section 2 of The National Debt Act, 1883, and running for periods of five, ten, and fifteen years were, under Section 4 of The National Debt and Local Loans Act, 1887, exchanged for equivalent new annuities running for a period not exceeding fifteen years from 12th July, 1887. Under Section 17 of the Finance Act, 1899, these annuities were again exchanged for annuities of equivalent capital value terminating in the year ending 31st March, 1912. The dates of expiry of the above annuities have been retarded owing to the suspension of the issues of sinking fund in the years 1885–6, 1900–1, and 1901–2. 3. The annuity of £83,672 12s., created under Section 1 of the Savings Banks Act, 1880, for the purpose of making good the capital deficiency on the Trustee Savings Banks Account, computed at £3,573,405, was, by Section 10 of the Savings Bank Act, 1904, extended from 1908 to 1917. The annuity as originally set up was calculated

to accumulate to the capital deficiency at 20th November, 1880, by 1908. The accumulated fund at 20th November, 1903, amounted to £2,468,301, and the payments from that date will suffice to make good the balance of £1,105,104, while setting free the interest on the securities acquired for the annuity and thus increasing the income account of the Savings Banks Fund. Besides the annuities mentioned above, the suspension during the war of the capital portions of the new terminable annuities created by the Finance Act, 1899, rendered necessary the prolongation of the period of these annuities to the extent of the time of their suspension; but this arrangement of course involved no alteration in the amounts of the annuities. The capital deficiency on the Trustee Savings Banks Fund was calculated under Section 1 of the Savings Banks Act, 1880, which practically provided for the assets being valued on a 3¼ per cent. basis. The sum accumulated by the Savings Banks Deficiency Annuity set up to make good this deficiency amounted on 20th November,

1903 to - - - -	£2,468,301
and since that date the instalments of the annuity have provided -	251,018
Total amount applied to the reduction of the capital deficiency on the Trustee Savings Bank Fund - - - -	£2,719,319

The amounts applied to the reduction of the capital deficiency on the fund for friendly societies have been:—

	£
1886–7 Issued from the Consolidated Fund - -	20,000
1887–8 Issued from the Consolidated Fund - -	10,000
Old Sinking Fund of 1886–7 -	776,006
1888–9 Part of Old Sinking Fund of 1887–8 - -	463,820
Total amount applied - -	1,269,826

The sum issued from the Old Sinking Fund in 1889 was the amount required to make good the capital deficiency at the 20th November, 1888, on the basis of a market price valuation of the securities.

Kikuya Hut Tax.

VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH (Maidstone): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether there has been any recent alteration in the hut tax imposed in the Kikuya country, in British East Africa; and, if so, what alteration has been made.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) I am not aware that there has been any change in the rate of hut tax in the Kikuyu country since it was raised to Rs.3 per hut on the 1st April, 1906.

Cheap Trains Act.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Bill to amend the Cheap Trains Act will be introduced this session; and, if so, when.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) I fear that there is no chance of introducing a Bill to deal with cheap trains during the present session.

Moray Firth Fisheries.

SIR ARTHUR BIGNOLD (Wick Burghs): To ask the Secretary for Scotland if he can now say when the Government will submit to the House a Bill to extend to England the law, now applicable to Scotland only, prohibiting the sale of Moray Firth caught fish in England.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) I cannot at present name a day.

Income-Tax on Charities.

MR. R. PEARCE (Staffordshire, Leek): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what total amounts during the financial years ending March, 1906, and March, 1907, were returned to public charities or allowed to them by way of exemption from property or income-tax.

(*Answered by Mr Asquith*) Figures for the year 1906-7 cannot yet be given. But for the two preceding years the amounts of income exempted from tax as devoted to "charitable" (in the legal sense) purposes, were as follows:—

	£
Year to 31st March, 1905 -	10,005,000
Year to 31st March, 1906 -	10,532,000

Madras Police.

SIR SEYMOUR KING (Hull, Central): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether, in accordance with the suggestion thrown out by the Secretary of State in answer to a Question on 15th May, 1906, any officers of the Madras Police have memorialised the Government of India and the Secretary of State with regard to the injurious effect on their *status* and prospects of promotion resulting from the drafting of an officer from Burma into the upper grade of the provincial service; and whether any steps have been taken, or are in contemplation, to remedy their alleged grievances.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) I received through the Government of India memorials from twelve officers of the Madras Police on the subject of the transfer of an officer from Burma to the Madras Presidency. After fully considering the memorials, I was unable to admit that the memorialists had any claim to compensation. As a result of the changes consequent on the Report of the Police Commission, they had gained not only an actual increase of pay but also much improved prospects of promotion.

East Bengal Railway Robbery.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he has any official information with regard to the attack by railway robbers on two British officers, Lieutenant Blane, at Campbellpore, and Police-Inspector Crabbe, on the East Bengal line, both of whom were wounded, one being shot and the other stabbed; and what steps he intends to take to prevent the recurrence of such outrages.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley*) I have no official information on the subject. I have no doubt that every possible step to prevent the recurrence of such outrages will be taken by the local authorities concerned.

Cookstown Estate in Chancery.

MR. KETTLE (Tyrone, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that negotiations for the sale to the tenants of the estate managed by Judge Ross's Court in the townlands of Tolvin and Tullyodonnell, near Cookstown, county Tyrone, were opened two years ago; that an agreement was arrived at with regard to terms, but that since that time the tenants have received no communication on the matter from either the receiver, Major Alexander, or the Land Commission; and, inasmuch as the estate has been in Chancery for more than twenty years, will he endeavour to have an offer made to Judge Ross by the Estates Commissioners so that the land may be transferred to the tenants.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners have recently made an offer to the Land Judge for the purchase of the estate in question, and the offer will be considered by the learned Judge in due course.

Irish Land Purchase and Land Stock.

MR. FFRENCH (Wexford, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Land Purchase (Ireland) Acts provide that a tenant may purchase land stock and with it pay off the purchase money either wholly or in part; and whether any machinery has been provided by the Government for the carrying out of this portion of the Land Purchase Acts.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I must refer the hon. Member to the Answer which I gave to the Question on this subject put by the hon. Member for South Kilkenny on 18th June.†

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Return of British and Foreign Fleets.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the Return of Fleets (Great Britain and Foreign Countries) is the only official document purporting to give the relative naval strength of countries that is issued; whether he is aware that an undertaking was given to the House, on 8th November, 1906, that the Admiralty were desirous that the Return should give an accurate, complete, and faithful picture of the strength of the Navy; and whether, seeing that the Return issued on

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† See (4) *Debates*, clxxvi., 287.

2nd July includes nine battleships and fourteen cruisers which are officially excluded from our fighting strength, the Admiralty will grant an accurate Return of relative fighting strength.

MR. COWAN (Surrey, Guildford): At the same time may I ask the Secretary to the Admiralty why a number of battleships and cruisers, which we have ceased to maintain for three years past, are included in the Return of Fleets (Great Britain and Foreign Countries).

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): This Return, as stated in the explanatory notes, includes all vessels of each Navy which retain their armaments and have not yet been placed on the sale list. It would be misleading to adopt a more rigid standard in the case of the British Navy than is adopted by foreign Powers in their official publications from which the information relating to foreign fleets is taken. This Return, coupled with the information given in the Navy list, appears to the Admiralty to afford as accurate a statement of the strength of the Navy as can be given without entering into technical details which, in the interest of the public service, must be withheld.

MR. BELLAIRS said that, as the Return was stated to include all ships which retained their armaments and had not been placed on the sale list, he would like to know why it did not include H.M.S. "Victory," the flagship of Nelson, which had not surrendered her armaments and had not been placed on the sale list?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The question is perfectly ridiculous.

MR. BELLAIRS asked why the right hon. Gentleman had not carried out his promise to give an accurate, complete, and faithful picture of the strength of the Navy?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The Admiralty have carried out their promise that an accurate and faithful Return should be made.

Home Fleet.

SIR BERKELEY SHEFFIELD (Lincolnshire, Brigg): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can state the names and class of the ships of the Home Fleet, exclusive of the fully-manned ships of the Nore Division; whether these vessels can be, and have been, made ready for service within a few hours; if so, when; and whether he will give the number and class of ships so made ready.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: As regards the first part of the Question, I must refer the hon. Member to the Navy List, pages 270 to 270*e*. Unless undergoing refit, the ships referred to can be made ready for sea within a few hours, with the exception of the special service vessels; but no test mobilisation has been carried out since the formation of the Home Fleet last March. The vessels now composing the Home Fleet were successfully mobilised in a few hours for last year's manœuvres, and the conditions are now more favourable to rapid mobilisation.

MR. BELLAIRS: The right hon. Gentleman says the ships were mobilised in a few hours for last year's manœuvres. Is he aware that seven days before the Admiralty issued the appointments of officers and five days before drafted reserve men down to the ports?

*MR. SPEAKER: That hardly arises out of the Question.

SIR BERKELEY SHEFFIELD: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, hitherto, arrangements have always been made to keep men to their own ports as far as possible, both for the sake of enabling men to go home when in port and to encourage *esprit de corps*; and whether the crews at Portsmouth, Devonport, and Chatham are chiefly composed of men belonging to those ports.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The answer to both Questions is in the affirmative; but a few temporary exceptions have been made to this general principle to meet special manning requirements.

British Central Africa Protectorate—British Laws.

*MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether English Laws in general run, and whether the Workmen's Compensation Act in particular runs, in the British Central Africa Protectorate.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): I must refer my hon. friend to the terms of Section 15 (2) of the British Central Africa Order in Council of 1902. The terms of the section are somewhat difficult to construe, but it is clearly intended to apply the principles of the law of England to the Protectorate. I hesitate to express an opinion, however, as to whether a particular Act is so made applicable; that is a question which can only be authoritatively decided by a competent Court.

*MR. REES: Do I understand that the Colonial Office can express no opinion whether this Statute runs or not in the Protectorate?

MR. CHURCHILL: It is a matter which can only be decided by a competent tribunal.

*MR. REES: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that it is a serious matter for companies with salary lists running to tens of thousands of pounds in the Protectorate?

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) He is not a judge yet.

SIR EDWARD CARSON (Dublin University): Has not the Government power to make the Act run by Order in Council?

MR. CHURCHILL: I believe it was intended by the Order in Council that British law should run in the Protectorate, but I cannot say if it can be enforced in case of each particular Act.

SIR EDWARD CARSON: But cannot the Government, if it chooses, amend the Order in Council so as to make this Act applicable?

MR. CHURCHILL suggested that notice should be given.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD (Liverpool, West Derby): Is the House to understand that the Under-Secretary does not know what laws obtain in different parts of the Empire?

MR. CHURCHILL: In legal matters I only know what I am obliged to know, and I am not obliged to know more than I have said.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD: Which is extremely little.

*MR. REES: Will the right hon. Gentleman ascertain the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown so as to enable him to advise me on this point?

MR. CHURCHILL: The hon. Member can obtain, I believe, the highest legal advice at very moderate fees. It is not the function of the Colonial Office to give him legal advice.

*MR. REES: I have taken legal advice and got no more precise information than the right hon. Gentleman has given me; hence my appeal to himself.

New Zealand.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what are the steps, and when will they be taken, to carry out the desire of New Zealand to be created a Dominion.

MR. CHURCHILL: On the receipt of an Address from both Houses of the New Zealand Legislature praying that the style of the Colony may be altered to "Dominion of New Zealand," his Majesty will be advised to give effect to the request by means of an Order in Council and a Proclamation.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): Will the right hon. Gentleman state in what material way the *status* of a Dominion differs from the *status* of a Colony?

MR. CHURCHILL: I think no actual legal or material consequence will follow, but the Colony of New Zealand greatly desires to acquire this new style, and we have felt it our duty to meet their wishes.

MR. R. DUNCAN (Lanarkshire, Govan); What will then be the proper description of the Colony?

MR. CHURCHILL said that after the Proclamation it would be improper to refer to New Zealand by any other title than Dominion.

Transvaal Land Settlers.

MR. LYTTELTON (St. George's, Hanover Square): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what is the amount of the obligations incurred by the late Government of the Transvaal to the land settlers in the Colony; and what funds are now at the disposition of the Land Board to meet the same.

MR. CHURCHILL: I cannot at present give the exact figures, but the Secretary of State is in communication with the Governor with regard to them.

MR. LYTTELTON: The right hon. Gentleman stated on a previous occasion that the Government had an obligation of honour towards these settlers. If that is so, is he not able to say what these obligations are?

MR. CHURCHILL: Obligations of honour cannot usually be assessed in pounds, shillings, and pence. The Government have telegraphed to Lord Selborne in the matter to find out exactly, and I do not think a long period of time will elapse before I can give an exact Answer. At present I can only give a more or less general Answer.

Alaskan Seal Fishery—Seizure of a British Schooner.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in what circumstances the Canadian sealing schooner "Carlotta G. Cox" has been seized by the United States revenue cutter "Rush," and taken captive into the nearest port in British Columbia; whether, as stated by the captain of the "Rush," several Japanese schooners were fishing at points closer to the Pribyloff Islands than that at which the "Carlotta G. Cox" was captured; and what are the respective positions of Canada and Japan in regard to fishing rights in these waters.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): His Majesty's Ambassador at Washington has reported that he is informed by the United States Government that the sealing schooner "Carlotta G. Cox," of Victoria, British Columbia, has been seized by the United States Revenue cutter "Rush" for illegally taking fur seals on the Fairweather Ground off the coast of Alaska, which is within the prohibited area agreed upon by Great Britain and the United States by the regulations embodied in the Award of the Paris Tribunal of Arbitration of 15th August, 1893. The captain of the "Rush" has been directed to deliver the vessel to the proper authority of Great Britain at the most convenient port in British Columbia. By Article II. of the Behring's Sea Arbitration Award, Great Britain and the United States undertook to forbid their subjects and citizens to kill seals during the period from 1st May to 31st July in that part of the Pacific Ocean, inclusive of the Behring Sea, situated to the north of 35° N. latitude and east of longitude 180° west of Greenwich till that meridian strikes the water boundary between the United States and Russia. Fairweather Ground is situated within those limits, but is nowhere near the Pribyloff Islands to which other regulations apply. Canadians are, of course, bound by this arrangement, but the Japanese Government were not parties to it, and it is believed that at the time of the Award Japanese sealing vessels did not frequent the Behring Sea in any numbers. I may add that Article I. of the Order in Council of 30th April, 1894, for carrying out the provisions of the Award, authorises the commanding officer of any vessel belonging to the naval or revenue service of the United States, and appointed for the time being by the President of the United States for the purpose of carrying into effect the powers conferred by the article in question, to seize and detain any British vessel which has infringed the prohibition mentioned above.

MR. R. DUNCAN: Did the captain make the statement cited in the Question?

SIR EDWARD GREY: I have no information as to that.

MR. R. DUNCAN asked the right hon. Gentleman to inquire whether Japan had more right than Canada in these waters.

SIR EDWARD GREY: According to my information there is a misunderstanding in the Question, which asks whether several Japanese schooners were fishing at points closer to the Pribyloff Islands. The "Rush" was nowhere near the Pribyloff Islands, to which other regulations apply.

Egyptian Legislative Assembly and the Press.

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON (Northumberland, Tyneside): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in view of the remark of Lord Cromer in his despatch of 8th March (Egypt No. 3, 1907), that he sees no objection to the presence of reporters at the meetings of the General Assembly and the Legislative Council of Egypt, and in view of the consensus of Egyptian opinion in favour of full publicity being given to the proceedings of both Chambers, any modification of the present law is in contemplation.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I am not aware that any modification of the present law on this point is in contemplation, or has been asked for.

Egyptian Public Companies.

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can state approximately the amount of native and foreign capital now invested in public companies in Egypt, the number of foreign companies trading in Egypt without being there registered, and what proportion they bear to the number of companies registered.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I will inquire whether there are any statistics or material available from which the information asked for can be obtained.

Western Frontier of Egypt.

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Egyptian Government has established a military post at Sidi Barani, on the north-west, forty miles from the Turkish post at Salloum, and near a Bedouin encampment; and, if so, whether, in view of the danger of friction thus set up, he will now advise the Egyptian Government to enter into negotiations for the proper delimitation of the western frontier of Egypt.

SIR EDWARD GREY: The Egyptian Government have established a coast-guard post to prevent smuggling at Sidi Barani, half-way between Sollum and Mersa Matru. There is nothing in this act which renders delimitation necessary, or is likely to give rise to friction. The chief trouble on the frontier has arisen from disputes not between Turkish and Egyptian officials, but between the Bedouin tribes.

United States and the Boxer Rising Indemnity.

MR. C. E. PRICE (Edinburgh, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has any official information showing that it is the purpose of the United States of America to release China from the payment of all but the actual expenses incurred by the American authorities in the Boxer rising, amounting to $11,000,000; and, if so, whether a similar course will be taken by this country.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I have had no official information of the nature indicated in the hon. Member's Question; but the claim of His Majesty's Government was originally based upon the estimate of actual expenditure incurred, which is the principle advocated in the hon. Member's Question.

Macedonian Outrages.

MR. ALDEN (Middlesex, Tottenham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he can inform the House as to the number of deaths by violence that have occurred in Macedonia since November, 1906.

SIR EDWARD GREY: The total number of deaths reported by His Majesty's consular officers in Macedonia from December to May last inclusive is 422. This includes members of armed bands killed in conflict with Turkish troops.

Terminable Annuities.

MR. MYER (Lambeth, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will give particulars of all cases of terminable annuities created since 1861, the terms of years of which annuities, as originally fixed, have been subsequently extended; and will he state what amounts have from time to time been applied to the reduction of the deficiency in the trustees savings banks and friendly societies, how the fact of the deficiency was established, and what is its present amount.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.): I am sending my hon. friend a memorandum giving the particulars for which he asks, and it will also be printed with the Votes.† He will perhaps excuse me from reading it now, as the statement is somewhat lengthy.

The Sugar Duty.

MR. FELL (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if the Finance Act, 1901, or any other Act, imposes any excise duty on sugar which may be produced in the United Kingdom from beet or from any other agricultural product.

MR. ASQUITH: The Answer is in the negative.

MR. FELL: May we infer, then, that sugar may be grown in this country, and that it will receive a protective duty of ½d.?

MR. ASQUITH: The hon. Gentleman cannot infer that. The Answer to his Question is in the negative.

Report on Judicial Administration.

MR. BERTRAM (Hertfordshire, Hitchin): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Council of Judges of the Supreme Court has, in conformity with the 75th Section of The Judicature Act, 1873, as in each year since 1874, made an annual Report to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, as one of the principal Secretaries of State, as to what, if any, amendment or alterations it would in their judgment be expedient to make in the Act or otherwise relating to the administration of justice, and particularly the defects which may appear to exist in the system of procedure or the administration of the law in any part of the Supreme Court; and, if such annual Report has not in any year or years been made, whether any, and, if so, how many Reports have been made to one of such principal Secretaries of State; and whether any such Reports can be laid upon the Table, particularly those which have any bearing upon the provisions of the Criminal Appeal Bill now before this House; and when the meeting for 1907 will take place.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): Since the Supreme Court of Judicature Act came into force the Judges have reported on three occasions; in 1880, on the Courts of Common Pleas and Exchequer; in 1884, on the circuit system; and in 1892, on various matters, including a Court of Criminal Appeal and the revision of sentences. The Report of 1880 was presented to Parliament in January, 1881; the report of 1884 is referred to in an Order in Council which was presented to Parliament (No. 251 of 1884); and the report of 1892, which deals with the question of criminal appeal, was presented to Parliament in 1894 (No. 127 of 1894). I understand that the Council of Judges have met twice this year, but the business at those meetings has not been made the subject of a Report to me.

Factory Inspector's Report.

MR. GILL (Bolton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how soon the Chief Inspector of Factories' Report for 1906 will be issued.

MR. GLADSTONE: The Report will, I hope, be available to Members on Wednesday next, the 10th.

Meat and Milk Supplies from Diseased Cows.

MR. BRAMSDON (Portsmouth): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to statements in an official report of the medical officer of health for Portsmouth that during the past twelve months sixty-seven diseased cows have been sold for human food at sums varying from 20s. to 80s. at certain country markets, and that the diseased meat of most of these cows has been disposed of in London; and, in the event of these statements being proved correct, what

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* See page 851.

steps His Majesty's Government propose to take to prevent such a state of affairs.

I beg also to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to statements in an official report by the medical officer of health of Portsmouth to the effect that the milk from cows badly diseased with tuberculosis is systematically sold; and whether, taking into consideration the statement in the interim Report of the Royal Commission on Human and Animal Tuberculosis to the effect that a considerable amount of disease and loss of life, especially amongst the young, must be attributed to the consumption of cow's milk containing tubercle bacilli, together with the Returns of the Registrar-General, which show that 10,000 children under five years of age die annually from various forms of tuberculosis, he will consider the advisability of the introduction by His Majesty's Government of legislation to prevent the keeping of tubercular cows on dairy farms.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): I am aware of the Reports referred to. As regards the former Question, I do not gather that it has been ascertained that the diseased meat of the cows mentioned in it has been disposed of in London, although London is stated to be the probable destination of many of the animals. I may point out that if any diseased animal or meat intended for the food of man is exposed for sale it is liable to inspection and seizure. The matters, however, to which the Questions relate are receiving my consideration.

Medical Officers of Health Return.

SIR J. DICKSON-POYNDER (Wiltshire, Chippenham): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he can state when the Return relative to Medical Officers of Health and Inspectors of Nuisances, granted by him on 11th March, will be circulated.

MR. JOHN BURNS: It has been found necessary to communicate with the several rural district councils in order to obtain the particulars desired. Most of the replies have been received, and I hope that the Return may shortly be completed.

Scotstoun (Glasgow) Post Office.

MR. BARNES (Glasgow, Blackfriars): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that a sub-office has been opened at Scotstoun, Glasgow; that the district served from this office was, until 1st July, part of the Glasgow postal delivery, the postmen being paid at the Glasgow scale, 19s. to 30s.; that under the present arrangement the pay is fixed at 18s. to 24s.; and whether, bearing in mind that the wages of postmen are fixed at the cost of living, and this has not been reduced by the alteration of postal facilities, he will take steps to see that the Scotstoun postmen are paid at a rate not lower than hitherto given.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): There was a local demand for the opening of a sub-office at Scotstoun, which I was glad to be able to meet, and so to improve the postal facilities of the district. The postmen who formerly served the district from the Glasgow office were attached to that office, and were paid on the Glasgow scale, and their scale of pay will not be affected. The postmen who are now employed at the Scotstoun sub-office are on the same scale of pay as those employed at other sub-offices in the neighbourhood of Glasgow.

Employers' Liability—Post Office Insurance.

MR. GILL: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he proposes to allow any special facilities at the post-office to enable small employers to insure their workpeople against the liabilities imposed under the Workmen's Compensation Act; and, if so, will he state what those facilities will be.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I have been giving careful consideration to the subject, and to the Report which the Departmental Committee made to me concerning it. I have not yet arrived at a decision in the matter. But, as recommended by the Committee, notices calling attention to the Act and the desirability of insurance are being displayed in post-offices; and a leaflet explanatory of the Act will be available at post-offices shortly.

West Ham Education Dispute.

MR. ALDEN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education if he is aware of the disorganisation in the educational work of West Ham, consequent on the dispute between the teaching staff and the local educational authority; and whether he will cause full inquiry to be made into the circumstances of the case and endeavour to arrange for a conference between the two parties, with a view to a settlement of the differences which have already seriously affected the schools in that district.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): I regret the continuance of this unfortunate dispute, but it does not appear to me to be a case in which the Board of Education have any ground for intervention.

MR ALDEN inquired whether if the two parties submitted their cases to the President he would arbitrate.

MR. MCKENNA: I should be most happy to assist in any way to put an end to this dispute, and if the circumstances mentioned by the hon. Member arose I would consider the expediency of the course he suggests.

Tallington Council School.

MR. NICHOLLS (Northamptonshire, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether his attention has been called to the deadlock in the management of the council school at Tallington; whether he is aware that the clerk, at the parish meeting in 1903 at which two managers were appointed, having omitted to state in the minutes the length of time for which they were appointed, now holds that such managers were appointed for life or until they may choose to resign, and that these managers, having refused to resign, the parish is disfranchised; and will he say what steps, if any, he intends to take in this matter.

MR. MCKENNA: I should be obliged if the hon. Member would defer this Question until Monday next, when I hope to be in a position to give a definite reply.

Training Colleges—Code and Regulations.

SIR WILLIAM ANSON (Oxford University): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education when he proposes to lay upon the Table the code and the regulations for training colleges.

MR. MCKENNA: The code has already been laid upon the Table, and copies should be available for distribution by the end of the week. I hope the training college regulations will be presented tomorrow.

Low Valley Schools.

LORD EDMUND TALBOT (Sussex, Chichester): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education what school accommodation is now available in Low Valley, and for what number is accommodation proposed to be provided; whether the schoolhouse in which the present council school is carried on was condemned by the Board of Education; and, if so, on what date; and on what date the site was secured for the new school.

MR. MCKENNA: Low Valley is primarily served by two schools with accommodation for 572 children, but there are others which may be available for scholars resident in the outlying parts of the district. The new school will accommodate about 720 children. The buildings of the present council school have not been formally condemned, but the Board intimated in December, 1905, that they could only be recognised pending the completion of the new school. The site for the new school was approved on the 3rd July, 1906, but I understand that owing to legal difficulties the conveyance has not yet been completed.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): Are we to understand that a site has not been secured?

MR. MCKENNA: One has been approved, but owing to legal difficulties the conveyance has not been completed.

LORD BALCARRES: Still the local authority has not got a site for the new school.

LORD R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.): And is the net result that there are only 576 school places available, whereas 720 are required?

MR. MCKENNA: No Sir.

Scrivenery Department—Royal Courts of Justice.

Mr. ALDEN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will explain why promotion in the Scrivenery Department in the Royal Courts of Justice has become debarred to men who often temporarily fill superior positions, and much of whose work is highly technical, requiring long practical experience; whether he will consider the possibility of giving the clerks in this Department sick pay, holiday pay, and pensions, seeing that as the result of their work a profit is received by the Treasury; and whether some inquiry into the whole question of this Department will be made.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Runciman, Dewsbury): In the opinion of the Lord Chancellor and of the Treasury the present organisation of the Scrivenery Department is satisfactory, and the remuneration amply sufficient. There do not, therefore, appear to me to be any grounds for instituting an inquiry into the subject.

Welsh Crown Mine Agent.

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the post of Crown mine agent for the counties of Anglesey, Carnarvon, Denbigh, Merioneth, and Montgomery recently became vacant; and, if so, under what circumstances; and whether any, and, if so, what appointment has been made thereto, and the date of such appointment; and what are the special mining or other engineering qualifications of the gentleman who has received the appointment.

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. George Whiteley, Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey): My hon. friend has asked me to reply to this Question. The position of Crown mine agent for North Wales became vacant owing to the death of Mr. Job Bowen, the late holder of the office. Mr. R. O. Roberts, solicitor, of Carnarvon, was appointed to fill the vacancy on the 24th June last. No special mining or engineering qualifications are necessary. The duties attaching to the post are three-fold in character—namely, those of a solicitor, an accountant, and a surveyor. Mr. Roberts was considered to possess in the greatest degree the necessary combination of these qualifications.

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD: Is it not the case that the office became vacant owing to the death of one of the joint holders?

Mr. GEORGE WHITELEY: When the second holder was appointed two years ago it was expressly stipulated that on the death of Mr. Job Owen he would have no claim to the appointment.

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD: Do I understand that a mining agent needs no knowledge as a miner or engineer?

Mr. GEORGE WHITELEY: I will send the hon. Gentleman a schedule of the duties appertaining to the office, and he will see that the mining qualification is a very subsidiary one. There is an inspector-general of mines for the whole district.

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD: Was not the gentleman appointed election agent for the President of the Board of Trade, which was probably his only engineering qualification?

Mr. GEORGE WHITELEY: At any rate he appears to have engineered the election pretty well.

The Public Trustee.

Mr. BOTTOMLEY (Hackney, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General whether he is aware that Mr. C. J. Stewart, whom it is proposed to appoint Public Trustee, has for several years past been chairman of a brewery company, which under his direction has been in financial difficulty, and that when previously occupying the position of Senior Official Receiver in companies' winding-up he was reprimanded by Mr. Justice Hawkins for displaying animus and bias in the discharge of his duties; and whether he will state what are the special qualifications possessed by Mr. Stewart for discharging the duties incidental to the new office of Public Trustee.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir John Walton, Leeds, S.): I have to inform the hon. Member that I have no connection whatever with this appointment; but I have communicated with the Lord Chancellor and obtained the necessary materials to give him an Answer. It is the fact that Mr. Stewart has for some years been the chairman of a brewery company, but there is, I understand, no ground for the statement that any financial difficulty which it may have experienced was during his direction. It is true that Mr. Justice Hawkins, in the course of the Hansard prosecution, used language to the effect mentioned in the Question; but I am informed that the Lord Chancellor and the President of the Board of Trade at the time, and the learned Judge in charge of the winding-up of companies, were all satisfied with Mr. Stewart's conduct in that case. With regard to Mr. Stewart's qualifications, I have already stated them, and I need only add that I understand he filled the high offices to which I referred with the entire satisfaction of those by whom he was employed and to whom he was responsible. The Lord Chancellor informs me that he selected Mr. Stewart, after careful and prolonged consideration of many names, as the candidate distinctly best fitted by character and experience for the difficult work of inaugurating the office of Public Trustee.

MR. BOTTOMLEY asked the hon. and learned Gentleman whether it was the fact that under Mr. Stewart's direction of this brewery company there had been not only a formal reduction of its capital of £1,500,000, but a shrinkage in market value of £2,000,000; whether the hon. and learned Gentleman himself, in the course of the trial "Regina v. Isaacs," did not charge Mr. Stewart with deliberately suppressing an important document with a view to obtaining a verdict; and, generally, whether he did not think that there was a wider field of choice available to the Government for the post of Public Trustee than an unsuccessful brewery director.

SIR JOHN WALTON: With regard to the first part of the Question, I understand the financial difficulty experienced by this company was before Mr. Stewart was invited to undertake the office of chairman, and that since he undertook that position the services he rendered had been satisfactory to the shareholders. For what I said as one of the counsel for the defence in the Hansard Union case I do not think I am responsible in my position as Attorney-General. With regard to the other portion of the Answer, I have no more to do with the appointment than the hon. Gentleman.

MR SWIFT MACNEILL asked Mr. Speaker whether it was in accordance with etiquette that a Member of the Bar should be interrogated in that House with reference to statements which he had made in the Courts.

*MR. SPEAKER: He is not obliged to answer.

MR. BOTTOMLEY asked the hon. and learned Gentleman whether the office of Public Trustee had yet been created, and whether it was not necessary for the Lord Chancellor, under Section 14 of the Public Trustee Act, to formulate a rule which must lie on the Table of that House before the Trustee could be appointed.

*MR. SPEAKER said that notice must be given of that Question.

*MR. BOTTOMLEY: I shall have much pleasure in doing so; and I also desire to give notice that on the Estimates and on every possible occasion I will call attention to this scandalous job.

Illegally Enclosed Common Land.

SIR J. JARDINE (Roxburghshire): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether any endeavour has ever been made to procure the restoration of any of the commons or wastes referred to by the witnesses before the Select Committee of this House, appointed in 1844, to report on the enclosure of commons, as having been illegally enclosed, as if they were common fields or intermixed fields for which the Common Fields Land Act, 6 and 7 Will. IV., c. 115, made provision.

THE TREASURER OF THE HOUSEHOLD (Sir EDWARD STRACHEY, Somersetshire, S.): I presume the evidence to which my hon. friend refers is that of Mr. Blamire, at that time one of the Tithe Commissioners, who stated that under 6 and 7 Will. IV., c. 115 (the Common Fields

Inclosure Act), which applied solely to lands held in severalty during some part of the year, a very large extent of common and waste land had been dealt with. Section 157 of the General Inclosure Act, 1845, empowered the Inclosure Commissioners to consider applications from persons interested in awards under the Common Fields Inclosure Act, in which lands not properly within the scope of that Act had been included, and to confirm or amend such awards. There are, however, no records in the possession of the Board to show that any such applications were made to the Commissioners.

Meat and Milk Supplies from Diseased Cows.

MR. BRAMSDON: I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether his attention has been called to statements in an official Report of the medical officer of health for Portsmouth, to the effect that milch cows, badly diseased with tuberculosis, are systematically sold for human food at certain country markets; and further, that these cows, though almost dying from disease, had up to the time of their being exposed for sale been used for the supply of milk; whether he will have the facts as stated investigated; and, if found correct, whether the Board of Agriculture will make an Order, as empowered by the Diseases of Animals Act, 1894, making tuberculosis in animals the subject of administrative action by the Board.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: The attention of my noble friend has been drawn to the Report to which my hon. friend refers, but as it deals primarily with matters of public health he proposes to confer with my right hon. friend the President of the Local Government Board before taking any action thereon.

Innistiogue Fishery, Kilkenny.

MR. MEAGHER (Kilkenny, N.): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland) if he is aware of the effect on the fishermen in the neighbourhood of Innistiogue, in the county Kilkenny, of the action of Colonel Tighe, of Woodstock, who is owner of that part of the river; if he is aware that two pillars twenty-five feet high are built convenient to the river, on which men are placed day and night watching the fish pass up a shallow part of the river into a deep pool, and by a given signal to men higher up, who come down with a boat and drag-net, clear off the whole river from bank to bank, thereby depriving the fishermen higher up of any means of living; and will he see that the customary King's share is established intact, so that the fishermen higher up the river may have a means of living.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR IRELAND (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): The only illegalities suggested in the Question is the stretching of the net entirely across the river. The Department understand that the net is not stretched entirely across the river, but they are making further inquiries in the matter. The provision of a King's gap does not arise in connection with the mode of fishing described in the Question.

Illegal Trawling off the Coast of Kerry.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Board of Agriculture (Ireland) whether he is aware that the "Helga" has not visited the Ballinskelligs districts since the "Goldfinder" was successfully prosecuted for illegal trawling; that on 11th June three trawlers poached all night and morning, the weather being foggy; and whether, in view of the methods adopted by these trawlers, as, for example, fishing after sunset within the limits with their lights out, and that these offences do not appear to be reported by the coastguards, he will state what steps, if any, will be taken to put an end to these illegal practices and to safeguard the interests of the local fishermen.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The coast of Kerry has been patrolled by the "Helga" and the "Granuaile" since the successful prosecution of the steam trawler "Goldfinder" in June last. No complaint of steam trawlers working inside the limits off the Kerry coast has been received by the Department since the date referred to in the Question. Most of the captures of vessels fishing illegally have been made at night, and on no occasion has a steam trawler been observed fishing without lights, although on one occasion a trawler showed her ordinary side lights instead of her fishing lights. Having regard to the funds at the disposal of the Department the supervision exercised over the fishing grounds is all that can reasonably be expected, and it has proved very effective in reducing poaching.

Belfast Municipal Technical Institute.

MR. J. DEVLIN (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Belfast Corporation has refused to form a class for the teaching of Irish in connection with the municipal technical institute, whilst maintaining classes for the study of French and other foreign languages; and, if so, whether, seeing that the London County Council has recognised the value of the Irish language, and of Irish literature and history, by the establishment of several classes for the study of these, and in view of the importance of having its wealthy and intelligent citizens possessed of some knowledge of the language, literature, and history of their country, he will communicate with the local authority with a view to having Irish language classes established in connection with the municipal technical institute in Belfast.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction have no official knowledge of the action referred to on the part of the Technical Instruction Committee of the Belfast Corporation. The question of subjects most suitable to the circumstances of a county borough is one for the discretion of the local authority.

Cahirciveen Trawling Prosecution.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland) whether his attention has been called to the recent successful prosecution at Cahirciveen of a trawler for fishing within the prescribed limits; whether, in view of the increasing number of such offences, the Department will prosecute on information received from any person; and, if so, what portion of the fine levied will be given to the informant, and will the Department have notices to this effect posted in the principal fishery districts.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The vessel whose skipper was successfully prosecuted at Cahirciveen petty sessions was detected fishing illegally by the fishery cruiser "Helga" belonging to the Department. Several steam trawlers have been captured near the same place; and so far from the offence increasing, it has during the past two years greatly decreased. The Department are always prepared to act on definite information supplied by fishermen or others; and two convictions in Kerry were partly obtained on such evidence. Fines imposed in these cases must be lodged to the credit of the Department's Endowment Fund; but all expenses incurred, and full compensation for loss of time, would be given by the Department to persons who assisted in bringing offenders to justice. The offering of rewards for evidence, however, is open to objection. It is not always possible for fishermen to obtain the information necessary to enable the Department successfully to institute legal proceedings, inasmuch as the person selected for prosecution is the man in charge of the vessel at the time when the illegality is committed, and the requisite particulars can usually only be obtained by boarding the ship, and no one has the right to stop and board a vessel at sea except a duly authorised officer.

Belfast Electric Lighting Loan.

MR J. DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Report of the Local Government Board Inquiry, held at Belfast on 19th June, 1907, with reference to the application of the local corporation for a loan of £98,000 for the extension of the electric lighting system and other purposes, has yet been issued; if not, when it may be expected; and whether he would consider the advisability of forwarding a copy of the Report to urban authorities all over Ireland, directing special attention to the evidence given at the inquiry as to the success of the municipal ownership of the electric supply in the city of Belfast, the gross profit for last year amounting to £25,551, or 9·7 per cent. on the capital, the average for 296 provincial undertakings being 7·09 per cent.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): The Local Government Board have not yet received their inspector's report of the inquiry referred to in the Question, but they expect to receive it shortly. The Board point out that the steps to be taken for the lighting of urban districts is a matter for the consideration of the urban authorities themselves, and the Board therefore do not think it desirable that they should act upon the suggestion contained in the concluding part of the Question. The publicity which will doubtless be given to the hon. Member's Question will, I imagine, sufficiently effect the end which he desires.

Tuberculosis Notification in Belfast.

Mr. J. DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the recommendation of the medical superintendent officer of health for Belfast, Dr. Bailie, that the co-operation of all the medical practitioners of the city should be invited in the voluntary notification of tuberculosis, and that great advantages would result therefrom in regard to precautions dealing with tuberculous houses and areas; whether the deaths from tuberculosis in Ireland are over 12,000 per annum, or 16 per cent. of the total deaths registered, and that the number in Belfast is exceptionally high; and whether, in view of the importance of the subject and the unanimous sentiment amongst Irish medical men in favour of its being dealt with promptly and thoroughly, he will put himself in communication with the local authorities in Belfast, Dublin, and the principal centres of the country, with a view to taking such measures as will tend to mitigate the ravages of this disease.

Mr. BIRRELL: The attention of the Local Government Board has been called to the recommendation referred to in the first part of the Question. The statements made in the second part of the Question are substantially correct. The Local Government Board are constantly urging upon Irish local authorities the necessity for the full exercise of their powers under existing legislation with a view to checking the mortality from tuberculosis With regard to the concluding part of the Question, I may say that I have already been in communication with the general council of Irish county councils upon the subject of possible further legislation in this important matter, and have promised to receive a deputation from the council on the subject in the coming autumn.

Tullamore Unlawful Assembly Trial.

Mr. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, at a trial of twelve men indicted for unlawful assembly at the Tullamore assizes on Tuesday, it was given in evidence that two farmers had given up grazing farms in consequence of pressure exercised upon them by the local branch of the United Irish League; and whether he intends to take proceedings against the United Irish League.

Mr. BIRRELL: I am not in possession of the details of the evidence which was given in the case referred to. My right hon. friend the Attorney-General for Ireland conducted the prosecution in person, and will doubtless consider whether further proceedings should be taken as the result of the evidence which was given in the case. The Attorney-General is still engaged at assizes.

Irish Unrest—Justice Madden's Remarks.

Mr. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the remarks of Mr. Justice Madden, at the Tullamore assizes on Tuesday, that the crimes of cattle driving are the outcome of a widespread combination, and that against the methods of intimidation adopted the ordinary precautions for the protection of property seem to prove ineffectual; and what further steps the executive intend to take to deal with this combination and afford adequate protection to the victims of outrages who are carrying on a lawful industry under contracts recognised by law.

Mr. BIRRELL: I have seen a newspaper report of the learned Judge's remarks. The police measures which have been taken for the prevention of cattle driving are greatly in excess of the ordinary precautions for the protection of property. An extra force of twenty-two police is at present stationed in King's County. The police will continue to take all possible steps for the prevention of the offences in question, and for bringing offenders to justice.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that the remarks of Mr. Justice Madden and of other Judges on the state of the county were founded merely on official reports and not on their own personal observation, and were therefore entitled to no special weight ?

[No Answer was returned.]

Thomastown Cattle Raid Prosecution.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that at the Tullamore assizes on Tuesday, in the case of twelve men indicted for unlawful assembly on 27th May in connection with the scattering of cattle on grazing lands in the neighbourhood of Thomastown, the jury acquitted the accused on the charge of riotous assembly and disagreed on the count of unlawful assembly; and whether it is intended to bring these persons again to trial before a jury which can be relied upon to give a verdict according to the evidence.

MR. BIRRELL: My right hon. friend the Attorney-General for Ireland intends to direct that the accused persons in this case shall be again put on trial upon the charge on which the jury disagreed on the former occasion.

Irish Licensing Act.

MR. J. DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if it is intended to continue the Irish Licensing Act of 1902 by including it in the Expiring Laws Continuance Act this year.

MR. BIRRELL: The Answer is in the affirmative.

Alleged Insult to the Flag at Dundalk.

COLONEL McCALMONT (Antrim, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that on Sunday, 23rd June, one of the Newry and Dundalk steamship steamers conveyed the Dundalk Roman Catholic Temperance Society excursion from Dundalk to Kingstown, that after leaving Dundalk, one of the passengers, Patrick Hughes, cut down the Union Jack, or red or blue ensign, and threw it overboard; if this man is a rate collector for the local authority, with the approval of the Local Government Board; if officials are permitted to take part in political demonstrations and commit such acts of disloyalty; and what action the Government propose to take in the matter.

MR. BIRRELL: I am aware that newspaper reports to the effect stated in the Question have appeared. Mr. Patrick Hughes, the person referred to, was appointed rate collector by the local authority, with the approval of the Local Government Board, in the year 1900. No complaint has been received by the Board as to Mr. Hughes' alleged conduct in this case, and they have no evidence as to the facts.

Protestant Children in Belfast Roman Catholic School.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if it is the fact that two children named Welch, aged eight and seven respectively, are detained in a Belfast Roman Catholic Industrial School against the wish of their father, a widower and a Protestant, and that, although the children were baptised in the Protestant faith, the solicitor acting for the father had been informed by the right hon. Gentleman that he had decided they must be detained in the Roman Catholic School, and had refused either to release them or to transfer them to a Protestant School.

MR. BIRRELL said he had no knowledge of the facts, but would inquire into the matter.

Irish Land Purchase.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that nearly £30,000,000 is now required to meet land purchases under the Irish Land Act of 1903, actually arranged voluntarily between landlord and tenant; and whether he can inform the House of the nature of the arrangements by which he proposes to avoid any fresh issue of Guaranteed $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. Stock for Irish land purchase before 31st December next.

MR. ASQUITH: As the hon. and gallant Member is probably aware, there are many processes to be gone through, after an agreement for sale has been concluded, before the purchase money can be handed over to the vendor; and the sum of £30,000,000 to which he refers does not in any sense represent actual cash requirements during the next few months. The arrangements which are being made to provide the amount which will be required for cash advances during the remainder of the current calendar year were explained in the reply I gave to a Question by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Worcestershire, on Monday last.†

SIR E. CARSON: Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether any sales in Ireland are being delayed from want of cash?

MR. ASQUITH: So far as I know, none.

Tullamore Whisky Frauds.

MR. RAWLINSON (Cambridge University): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether a judgment for £65,000, or some other and what sum, has been signed in favour of the Inland Revenue against a firm of D. E. Williams and Company, Limited, distillers, of Tullamore, Ireland; whether such judgment was in respect of unpaid duties on whisky, or how otherwise; whether such duties were fraudulently withheld from the Inland Revenue; whether any, and what sum has been realised in respect of such judgment; and whether such sum was received by agreement in full satisfaction of the debt, or how otherwise.

MR. ASQUITH: The judgment in favour of the Inland Revenue for £65,000 represented the aggregate of fines of £200 and £100 each, incurred by the firm of D. E. Williams and Company, under Sections 101 and 113 respectively of the Spirits Act, 1880, for irregularities connected with the removal of spirits under permit, and was not in respect of unpaid duties. There was no positive evidence that duties had been fraudulently withheld from the Revenue. The Board of Inland Revenue have accepted £4,000 in full discharge of this debt, after satisfying themselves that it was not possible to obtain any larger amount.

Irish Land Purchase.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR (Kildare, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, when the amounts chargeable to each county in respect of sums drawn from the Guarantee Fund for the purposes of the Irish Land Purchase Fund, and when such sums were apportioned to the cash portion of the Guarantee Fund, the death duty was exhausted before the agricultural grant was made applicable.

MR. RUNCIMAN: Hitherto the death duties grant has proved more than sufficient to meet the charges against the Guarantee Fund, and the agricultural grant has therefore been paid over in full to the local taxation account. But in the subsequent distribution of the charge among counties it may happen that, although the death duties grant as a whole sufficed to cover the total charge, the share of a particular county in that grant would be less than its share of the charge. In that case the share of the county in the agricultural grant would be drawn upon. I have, however, no information as to the distribution made from the local taxation account over the several counties beyond that given by my right hon. friend the Chief Secretary in reply to a Question by the hon. Member for North Westmeath on the 16th April last.‡

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR asked whether it was not the intention of the Land Purchase Act of 1903 that the death duties should be entirely exhausted before the agricultural grant could be drawn upon for the Guarantee Fund.

MR. RUNCIMAN said that so far as his information went that was the rule that was being followed by the Treasury.

MR. MOONEY (Newry): Are we to understand that the Treasury Rules can be exercised to set aside an Act of Parliament?

MR. RUNCIMAN: The Treasury is acting within the law.

MR. MOONEY: But is it not statutorily enacted that the death duties fund shall be exhausted before any other fund is drawn upon?

MR. RUNCIMAN: We have acted within the law.

Skibbereen Smuggling Case.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that the Dutch ketch "Cosmopolite" was recently seized by H.M.S. "Skipjack," for smuggling, and that the charge was heard at Skibbereen, county Cork petty sessions, on 13th June last, and dismissed by the local bench of magistrates; will he state whether the "Cosmopolite" has yet been released, and, if not, whether it is in consequence of an irregularity at the trial; and what action the Government intend to take.

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† See page 358.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, clxxii., 750.

MR. RUNCIMAN: The hon. Member has correctly stated the facts of this case. The question of the liability of the vessel to forfeiture was not before the justices, and the Commissioners of Customs acting on the advice of the Law Officers of the Crown for Ireland have directed the detention of the vessel and further proceedings to be taken for her forfeiture under section 179 of the Customs Consolidation Act of 1876.

Killylea Postmaster.

MR. KILBRIDE (Kildare, N.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that Mr. Charles Morrow, postmaster at Killylea, acts as potato agent for wholesale buyers, and in that capacity is a direct rival to ratepayers in the districts; and whether, in view of the advantage of Mr. Morrow over other competitors due to their business telegrams passing through his hands, he will direct Mr. Morrow to resign this agency as a condition of his continuing to hold his position as postmaster.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I am making inquiry into the matter and will communicate the result to the hon. Member.

Swine Fever.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture whether, with reference to the case of the pig alleged to have been affected with swine fever and landed at Milford on the 21st November, 1905, were the usual representations made to the Irish Department of Agriculture; were the usual investigations made in Ireland in the district from which the pig was said to have come; and what was the result.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: The usual representations were made to the Irish Department of Agriculture in the case to which the hon. Member refers. The Department informed the Board that they were not able to trace the place of origin of this particular animal, but that they had ascertained that it was one of a number exposed for sale at Carlow Fair on the 21st November, 1905. General inquiries as to the health of swine in the neighbourhood of Carlow were made, but with negative results.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether, in all cases of the alleged importation of swine fever from Ireland, representations have been made to the Irish Department; and can he give any specific instance of swine fever having been discovered in the district from which the alleged disease was said to have been imported into Great Britain.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: The Answer to both Questions is in the affirmative. Representations were made in 1902 to the Irish Department with reference to certain swine imported from county Cavan, and the investigations thus set on foot brought to light the existence of disease in that district.

Diseases of Animals Act Regulations.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the hon Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether the regulations affecting the importation of pigs from Ireland into Great Britain were made under the Diseases of Animals Acts; and, if so, under what statutory authority the Secretary or any one of the Assistant-Secretaries acting alone, makes Orders under these Acts.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: The Orders to which the hon. Member refers were made under the Diseases of Animals Acts. All Orders under those Acts are made under the seal of the Board, which is authenticated by the Secretary or an Assistant-Secretary of the Board, in accordance with the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries Acts, 1889 and 1903.

MR. BOLAND: Who makes and issues these Orders? The Board has no existence apparently, for it never meets.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: The orders are issued under statutory authority.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS (Kent, St. Augustine's) asked the Prime Minister whether he could state what the business for next week would be.

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple) asked the right hon. Gentleman whether, before giving time to the debate on the Colonial Preference Resolution, he would obtain an assurance from the Leader of the Opposition that he would vote on the issue raised by that Motion.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs) said he could hardly be expeectd to control the proceedings of the Leader of the Opposition. The business for next week would be—Monday, Evicted Tenants (Ireland) Bill, Second Reading; Tuesday, the conclusion of the Committee stage of the Finance Bill; Wednesday, Land Values (Scotland) Bill, Second Reading; Thursday, Supply, Board of Education Vote; and Friday, the Motion for the new Judge, and some minor Bills. Monday, 15th July, would be allotted to the Motion by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's, Hanover Square, on Colonial Preference.

MR. MOORE (Armagh, N.) asked whether the Evicted Tenants Bill would be taken in Committee of the Whole House, or sent to a Committee upstairs.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said it was hardly time for deciding that question now. He would rather not give an Answer to the Question till a later period.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich) asked if the right hon. Gentleman would put down Army Estimates soon, in order to afford an opportunity of discussing the Woolwich discharges and the salary of the Secretary for War, for which they had patiently waited so long.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN replied that a good deal of time had been devoted to Army matters, and other Departments had a claim to consideration. He would, however, see what could be done.

LIGHTS ON VEHICLES BILL.

Consideration, as amended (by the Standing Committee), deferred from Monday next till Thursday next.

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

Report from the Select Committee, with Minutes of Evidence, and an Appendix, brought up, and read.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 240.]

NEW BILL.

BANKRUPTCY (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To consolidate and amend the Law of Bankruptcy in Scotland," presented by Mr. Cleland; supported by Mr. Bonar Law, Mr. Watt, Mr. Dundas White, Mr. Menzies, and Mr. M'Callum; to be read a second time upon Friday 19th July, and to be printed. [Bill 267.]

SUPPLY [15TH ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. EMMOTT, Oldham, in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1907-8.

CLASS IV.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £2,200, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1908, for a Grant-in-Aid of the Expenses of the Queen's Colleges in Ireland."

MR. KETTLE (Tyrone, E.) said he rose to move the reduction of the Vote by £100. He certainly did not do so from any feeling of hostility towards those somewhat unhappy institutions, the Queen's College in Ireland. As for moving a reduction of the amount of money to be spent either in this country or in Ireland upon education, such a thing would be farthest from the thoughts of any reasonable man. Anyone who was acquainted with the criticisms of Sir Norman Lockyer on the education system of Great Britain would appreciate what he was saying. When one remembered the amount of money spent on extensive forms of national immorality and compared it with the endowments of science, one appreciated the strength of his contention. As for Ireland—that paradise of the policeman — there the total Government endowments towards University education, including everything, was less by £15,000 than the amount spent on policing the city of Dublin. His Motion, however, was not made for that purpose, but for the purpose of drawing attention to the profoundly unstable and unsatisfactory condition of higher education in Ireland, and to draw special attention to the extremely anomalous position of the Government in regard to the suggested schemes for reforming the system. In discussing the Vote he understood it was customary and allowable to discuss the condition of University education in Ireland as a whole. It was only when they considered the system and fabrics as a whole that they could arrive at any conclusion of any value whatever. Their work of discussion was made easier and more necessary because the whole field of higher education in Ireland had come under the survey of two Commissions, one of which sat in 1901–03 and the other more recently. Those Commissions had collected every fact bearing on higher education in Ireland, and he thought they had also collected many irrelevant facts. But taking them altogether they constituted a complete encyclopædia of the problem of higher education in Ireland and gave hon. Members everything they needed to know in order to deal with the question. Someone had said there were certain questions in regard to which it was necessary in order to place them in their proper perspective and order, to recapitulate from the beginning. If anyone looked at the volumes of *Hansard* when the subject of Irish education had come under review they would see that that method had been pretty well adopted. He did not, however, intend precisely to follow that method, but there were one or two facts which ought to be stated about Queen's Colleges. Let them take the name by which the colleges were known in history, viz., "godless colleges." He found that that term was prevalent amongst people friendly to education in Ireland; that it was a successful phrase, used by a bishop, inasmuch as it killed the colleges. But it was not by an Irish bishop that the term "godless" was applied but by a Tory Member for the University of Oxford, Sir Robert Inglis. It was a curious anomaly that at that moment the only institutions for higher education in Ireland in which there were religious tests, were the so-called "godless" colleges. They had none, at least on paper, in Trinity College, and in the college which they allowed to be managed by Jesuits, viz., St. Stephen's Green, Dublin, there were no religious tests of any kind. Looking a little more closely into the matter they found that the first President of Queen's College, Galway, was a Catholic priest. It was only when the Government of that day had obstinately refused to make any concession of the most reasonable character that the new state of affairs began.

Whereupon the Gentlemen Usher of the Black Rod, being come with a Message for the House to attend the Lords Commissioners, the Chairman left the Chair.

Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair.

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners.

The House went; and, being returned—

Mr. Speaker reported the Royal Assent to a number of Acts. (See page 813.)

SUPPLY.

Again considered in Committee.

Question again proposed, "That a sum not exceeding £2,200, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1908, for a Grant in Aid of the Expenses of the Queen's Colleges in Ireland."

Mr. KETTLE, resuming his speech, said he was speaking of the existence of this extraordinary anomaly. It was a fact that at the present time any professor appointed to a chair in any of the three Queen's Colleges must, before he took office, sign a declaration that during his continuity of office in his professorial capacity he would not in any way suggest teachings or express opinions contrary to the doctrines of revealed religion. That was the case as it stood now. English Members had satisfied themselves that the cause of the failure of the Queen's Colleges scheme (and everybody admitted it was a failure) was the blind and malignant opposition of the Catholic bishops to review it in its historical aspect. They had the scheme set up in 1845, when there was a very different state of things in Ireland. In Ireland their scheme of primary education had been working badly, and there was no State system of secondary education. In England both Oxford and Cambridge were strictly denominational Universities with tests. Those were facts which should be taken into consideration. Everybody admitted that the colleges had failed to satisfy the demand of the people of Ireland for University education. That was driven home and emphasised in the Reports of both Royal Commissions. As it stood, the position was that Belfast was becoming Presbyterian; Galway had never been a success as a college, but it had produced some men of considerable distinction; and Cork had always occupied a middle position between mediocre success and complete failure. Those three institutions had an endowment from public funds of about £40,000, supplemented in Belfast and Cork by private endowments. Between the three they gave some sort of University education, in conjunction with the Royal University, to about 700 students. They were all three provincial, one in the extreme northeast, one in the west, and the other in the south. The only metropolitan institution of any kind that worked like the Queen's Colleges in connection with the University was University College in St. Stephen's Green. That differed from the Queen's Colleges in that it was built, not out of public funds, but out of funds privately raised by the Catholics of Ireland in the time of Cardinal Newman in 1854. If they took the income of the three Queen's Colleges they found they had £40,000, but the entire income of University College, including the salaries of the professors, was only about £7,000. If they compared the results achieved by the three endowed colleges with the results of University College they would find in every year and every examination for at least the last five years that the single unendowed University had secured more first-class honours and distinctions of every kind than the three Queen's Colleges put together. What was the University question in Ireland? It was that the University College population was practically the same as that of their other University institutions, but that while they gave £7,000 a year to the population which happened to be mainly Roman Catholic, they gave more than £7,000 a year to other colleges where the population was not mainly Roman Catholic. The three colleges worked in connection with the Royal University, which really served two functions. It served as a sort of conduit or channel through which certain public funds passed for the endowment of the Queen's Colleges and University College, and as a conduit pipe it had strange properties, obnoxious to the consciences of certain gentlemen in this country who held strong views on that subject. That enabled them to endow a Jesuit College. The other function of the Royal University was to examine the students of those colleges, and to award degrees on the basis of those examinations. In fact, as a university, the Royal had what might be called an occasional existence. He might be pardoned for occupying the time of the Committee with a story. The Royal University was a building in Earlsfort Terrace. A couple of years ago a friend of his who was awarded a medal for English verse went there for examination. He said to the hall porter, "What institution is this?" The porter replied, "You know very well it is the Royal University of Ireland." "Well," said his friend, "the last time I was round here it was a flower show." When it was not in use for educational purposes, the building of the Royal University was assigned to such uses as hygienic exhibitions and flower shows. How far did the Royal University go towards satisfying the demand for university education in Ireland? In dealing with that question he proposed to confine himself to the deliberate judgment of the Royal Commissions which had reported upon it, for a Royal Commission seemed to be hedged about by a certain divinity. The Royal Commission of 1901 said—

> "The system suffers from incurable defects. A false conception of learning is thus held up before the eyes of the student."

It said further that in regard to its constitution the Royal University was—

> "a political makeshift which is educationally indefensible."

It also said—

> "The present arrangement by which the degrees of the Royal University are obtainable by examination alone has lowered the ideal of university life and education in Ireland, and should be abolished."

Another Commission had pointed out that in connection with the system of education represented by the Royal University in Ireland a great many evil things existed. It concluded by saying that in public discussions in Ireland every form of economic heresy was right. Perhaps he should not mention that for fear it might make the Royal Commission popular with the Opposition. And yet, though that Royal University was deliberately condemned four years ago, the Government of the country had put nothing whatever in its place. The need for university education in Ireland had continued to increase. The figures as to the number of students who had come to attend the examinations and take degrees at this institution showed that in 1904 there were 3,267, that they rose in 1905 to over 3,400, in 1906 to 3,700, and in the present year to about 4,000. By the present system of education they were compelling men of the brightest intellects in Ireland to go to an institution, the degrees of which they had reduced to a sort of educational broad arrow. That Report had been in existence since 1903, and no attempt had been made to act upon it. In all the schemes of reform that had been proposed, the very key to the situation, the point of difference between these schemes had been—did they include Trinity College and take Trinity College into the general fabric of national life, or did they leave it out and allow it to continue in its present condition of privileged isolation? Why was it that the great majority of the people of Ireland had continuously refused to attend Trinity College? If there were no religious objection, there would be a great objection on grounds of national feeling. If neither of these held good there would be objection on the ground of bad equipment and educational inefficiency. At this moment Trinity College was not either Irish, or modern, or free. When the authorities of Trinity had pleaded for its maintenance they had always based their case on these three questions. Trinity College had been continuously described in that House as a fortress of anti-Irish feeling. Trinity College was the Dublin Castle of the Irish educational system. Surely it should be the duty of a national university to show hospitality to every lover of freedom. The hospitality shown by Trinity College towards the idea of freedom of education in Ireland was the hospitality shown by the Bastille towards certain French persons touched with ideas of freedom towards the end of the eighteenth century. One would think that students would be taught at Trinity the rights of national pride and power, but what did the professor of history say before the recent Commission? He said:—

> "I may be mistaken, but I believe I was the first to deliver a lecture on Irish history in Trinity College."

Trinity College had existed for 300 years, and the first lecture on Irish history was delivered in 1905! A professor who gave evidence before the Commission and spoke on behalf of the teachers of Latin in Trinity who spent their valuable lives in removing the textual corruptions of Juvenal and inculcating his moral corruptions in their full integrity, said that any ancient Irish literature they had was silly if it was not indecent, or indecent if it was not silly, and that the greater part of it was both silly and indecent. Happily, there was going on a certain change of spirit in Trinity College. It had developed an enormous capacity for self-admiration. Trinity College was making the most of the fact that one of the youngest professors, Mr. E. J. Gwynn, was doing valuable work in connection with the subject he had been appointed to teach. He remembered that four or five years ago a professor was brought over from

Liverpool to Dublin in order to teach scholars the Irish necessary for technical equipment and to make their work effective. The lectures were delivered first in a hall near Trinity College and afterwards in a little room in a private house in Dorset Street. From that point of view Trinity College was not Irish. But was Trinity College Irish in the constitution of its students? One of the most remarkable things about the majority of the really capable defenders of Trinity who happened to be Irish by birth was that they were very seldom people who went to Trinity themselves. It was rather curious, in the face of the defence put forward for the high standard of Trinity education, that the son of the present Chancellor of Trinity College was a student of two English universities. Trinity College was not modern in its ideas and equipment. Even its own friends admitted that it was a university of the classical type. What was the characteristic of a modern university? Surely the characteristic of a modern university was that it laid stress, not upon classical teaching, but upon science and every pursuit that increased the command of the human mind over matter and the source of wealth. In England they were not confined for University education to Oxford or Cambridge. Large scientific Universities like Liverpool, Birmingham, Leeds, and London had been founded. But in Trinity College the classics filled the whole field of University training. What did they understand in modern times by a University education of a scientific character? Let them go to France and study the career of such a man as Pasteur who was the very best type of the modern University man. They would not find such a man employing his time in correcting Greek and Latin texts. Pasteur was a Catholic—a man whom hon. Members from Ulster would describe as living in the bonds of mental slavery and in the fetters of Catholic belief. What they wanted to see in Ireland was such men as Pasteur, trained in their own University. What had Pasteur done? He laid the foundations of the science of bacteriology, and his researches had been turned into practical use by his students and followers. The vine in France was attacked by a ruinous disease; Pasteur discovered a means of fighting it and saving the wine industry. The whole silk industry of France was threatened by a disease amongst the silk worms; Pasteur, by his scientific investigations, provided a remedy. By means of those discoveries Pasteur presented to his native country a sum equal to the indemnity which France had to pay to Germany after the Franco-Prussian war. That was what they wanted for the Catholic people of Ireland. What had Trinity College done for science in Ireland? There was only one man of great distinction identified with it—the late Professor George Francis Fitzgerald—and he in a lecture delivered in 1896, said—

> "Why is it that we are so far behind in Ireland? Is it the fault of the farmers or the industrial classes? No, it is the fault of our educational system. The Intermediate Board will not allow boys in an agricultural college to learn botany. Trinity College will not allow students in their first year to learn experimental science for fear it might encourage the schools to teach children scientific methods. It is all very well to complain that the industrial classes are not industrious. That may be all true, but who is it that sets the example of being content with what their fathers did? It is the Board of Intermediate Education and the authorities at Trinity College, Dublin."

That was the testimony as to the work which Trinity College had done for the scientific training of the youth of Ireland. And later on Professor Fitzgerald said—

> "How can we expect any other result when the educational machinery of the country is controlled by a lot of very worthy old bookworms—"

—these were the senior fellows of Trinity College—

> "with more sympathy with the theory of equations and with Greek verse than with the industrial welfare of Ireland."

That was the testimony of its own most distinguished scientist, and in the Papers and Memoranda submitted to the recent Commission by the professors of Trinity College itself would be found the same story. So far as modern science teaching was concerned, Trinity College was a negligible quantity in the scholastic world. Then there was the question of the alleged secular character of Trinity College. Trinity College was neither Irish nor modern in its ideas of equipment. He would wait with very considerable interest to hear what could be said in defence of it. He came now to a question of the first importance, and that was as to the freedom from religious restrictions in Trinity College since 1873. He would quote two passages from the evidence given by Dr. Traill, who was not only a landowner but a professor of new kinds of bad grammar, before the Royal Commission. He was asked—

> "You would not allow one of your professors to teach his class Atheism?"

And his answer was—

> "We never would ask the question unless it were brought under our notice in a most extraordinary way."

Then he was asked—

> "But if it were brought under your notice?"
>
> "What do you mean by Atheism?"
>
> "That there is no God."
>
> "If he did that as against religion he might be interfered with; but if he meant that investigation in physics and so forth led him to that conclusion, we would not interfere with him."

He left the Committee to follow that explanation, whose subtlety and profundity he could not appreciate, probably for the reason that he had not a Trinity College education. But there was another gentleman who said that Trinity College was a University without tests, viz., Dr. J. K. Ingram, who stated in the *Positivist Review*—

> "Long a silent student and observer of the events and tendencies of my time, and regarding myself as under an implied contract not to interfere with the religious ideas of the young persons whose literary instruction was entrusted to me—"

—he was then Professor of Political Economy—

> "I do not, now that I am free from any such obligation, feel justified in continuing this reticence to the end."

Now let them consider what was the demand as expressed both by Catholic laymen and by Catholic Bishops on the question. They asked, as they had again and again asked, not for a denominational University, not for an institution from which anybody would be excluded because of religion, but in most definite fashion, for a University institution which would have no tests whatever. He need only go back to the present year when Mr. Bryce, before leaving for America, announced a scheme of University reform, which had never been abandoned as he understood it, but still held the field. Mr. Bryce sketched a plan of University institutions entirely without tests. The scholarships, professorships, and endowments of every kind would be open to any man, whatever his religion. And what was the answer of the Catholic Bishops? It might have been known. In 1887 they published a declaration which would be found in the Robertson Commission Report. The Report of the Commission stated in the most clear and unmistakeable language that what the Catholics of Ireland wanted was an institution without tests, and on the governing body of which would be a preponderance of laymen. There was laid before the Commission a letter written originally as a private letter from the Archbishop of Dublin to Sir Antony MacDonnell in which he said—

> "You are quite right in your recollection that the Catholic Bishops of Ireland have long since declared in the most formal manner that the Catholic claims in the matter of University education can be adequately met without the setting up of any system of religious tests."

They would all be glad of the opportunity of reading the private letters which had passed between the Leader of the Opposition and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover. The Archbishop went on to recapitulate the declaration of 1897, and concluded by saying that in January, 1894, he had been consulted by Mr. Wyndham as to whether the University question could be settled on the basis of the Dunraven scheme, which was understood to be submitted on behalf of the Government, and that the Bishops answered in the affirmative. The Archbishop was consulted by Mr. Wyndham as to whether the matter could be settled on that basis, and in consequence there was on 16th April, 1907, a declaration by the Bishops to this effect—

> "As to the particular plan of reform on which the Government has resolved to proceed, it is, in our opinion, quite possible, within the general outline of that plan, to meet substantially the claims that we have repeatedly put forward on behalf of the Catholic body of Ireland."

They said further—

> "We are prepared to accept it as final, and as far as we are concerned, the end of the agitation which we have so long maintained."

When Mr. Bryce put forward his scheme at the beginning of this year, they went out to meet him and told him that it should be settled on the same basis and without any sacrifice of principle on the part either of Ireland or of the English Radicals. That scheme which Mr. Bryce definitely put forward with the assent of the Catholic Bishops of Ireland held the field to-day. They would be content with that scheme, outlined by Mr. Bryce, and with a University institution in which there would be no tests. If they asked him whether as a matter of fact the predominant element in this institution would be Catholic, his reply was that undoubtedly it would be. If they set up a University institution for a Catholic population to adjust itself to modern culture, although it was not formally a Catholic institution—what else could reasonable men expect, unless indeed they adopted the very insolence of bigotry and fell back upon the contention that was at present in the minds of the opponents to the scheme, that Catholicism was a form of superstition. That was the only contention upon which they could impeach the sincerity of the Catholic Bishops of Ireland in regard to this question. He was inclined to believe, if the House proposed to adopt that attitude, that very little that could be said from the Irish Benches would alter that condition of mind. Let them take an instance of what this meant in actual practice. They had a University institution in Ireland frequented almost exclusively by Catholics, viz., University College, Dublin. It was an institution without tests. They found that in examinations conducted by mixed Catholic and Protestant examiners and persons of no particular religious opinions, Catholic students invariably carried off the great majority of the studentships and fellowships in philosophy. They would find from a study of its courses that an institution predominantly Catholic gave its students a far wider and more liberal course of reading than would be found in the University of Ireland, or Trinity College, Dublin. What was the case which was sought to be made against the scheme of Mr. Bryce? It was said, first of all, that it would interfere with the independence of Trinity College; but that was no part of the desire of the people of Ireland. What the majority of the people of Ireland desired was that Trinity College should be deprived, not of its independence, but of its present *status* of privilege in Ireland. The second objection to the scheme was that it contemplated taking its own money from Trinity College in order to endow this new college in Dublin. They demanded nothing from Trinity College except that it should maintain the traditions of Irish national life. He did not know what the mind of Mr. Bryce was on this matter, but they had some acquaintance with the false economy practised by previous British Governments in regard to Irish finance, and he would not be at all surprised if they took money from one institution to give it to another. He had noticed hitherto that when Governments carried through an Irish reform they invariably stole funds from some other Irish object to finance it. They would not, however, submit to the deprivation of Trinity College of one single penny of its income. Their mind and the mind of Ireland was clear upon that subject. On the contrary, they hoped that if Trinity College developed its scientific faculties properly its funds would be increased. It was said that Catholics in Ireland supported the scheme of Mr. Bryce because they wanted to shelter themselves from the buffets of an unfeeling world. From the point of view of antiquity the 300 years of the life of Trinity College were but a wink of the eye as compared with the life of the Irish nation and the future of the Irish race, against which Trinity College had always been in a state of hostility. It was impossible, to his mind, to invest Trinity College with any hoary antiquity except, perhaps, in regard to the ages of the senior fellows and their ideas of the functions of a modern University, and perhaps, most of all, the survival of political prejudice there. He was delighted to find how successfully Trinity College had taken in so many educational authorities. There were certain institutions, one of them not very far removed from that Chamber, in regard to which it might be said, the less they knew of them the greater the impression they made upon them. He thought the prestige of Trinity College was very much of that character. He could not help remembering that it was founded on money the result of confiscation of the estates of Catholics in Ireland, and that it was the home of every expiring prejudice. He thought exceedingly little of Trinity College. On the other hand, what was the case for the scheme of Mr. Bryce, and what was the objection to that scheme? First of all, the Irish nation had a considerable claim upon Trinity College, as its income of £90,000 odd was derived from Ireland.

SIR E. CARSON was understood to dissent and say it was only £40,000.

MR. KETTLE said the right hon. Gentleman would certainly find a statement about £91,000 in the accounts; but the Commission, while it did not make any suggestion of an improper keeping of accounts, did say that the accounts ought to be better kept and submitted to an auditor. But whether the sum was £40,000 or £90,000 did not matter for the purposes of his argument, that the Irish people had a claim upon Trinity College, and the whole desire of those who supported the scheme of Mr. Bryce was to make Trinity College what it never was—a part of Ireland; to compel it to come down from the Olympian heights which it had occupied, and take a useful and profitable part in the life of the twentieth century. Mr. Bryce's scheme had received the support of Catholic laymen in Ireland, and the Bishops also unequivocably accepted it. University College would be necessarily extinguished under the scheme, but every one of the lay professors of that college had signed a memorial in favour of it, while the senate of the Royal University had also signed a petition in its favour. It had also been adopted by the Presbyterian General Assembly. When the present Leader of the Opposition was in office he demanded as a first principle of legislation that there should be unanimity on this question. If the right hon. Gentleman meant absolute unanimity then he would say there was very little justification for continuing such a system as this. They had practical unanimity in favour of Mr. Bryce's scheme, and they had more. There was not only unanimity, but a passionate desire for this reform for which they had waited more than a generation. The Nationalist Party wished to think that the scheme was put forward not for any political purpose, but on its merits, and that the promises of the Liberal Party had a higher value than those of a political gambler. They knew that the only opposition came from Trinity College; they had had foreign petitions from England and Scotland in defence of Trinity College, and they knew how those petitions were canvassed. Trinity College was not by any means the popular and respected body which the people believed. The apologists for Trinity College were now in public and private urging the adoption of the Robertson scheme, which while it had every defect, had in their eyes one merit—it left Trinity College alone. It was well known that when the Commission reported in 1903 the suggested Robertson scheme fell so entirely flat that the late Government made no attempt between 1903 and 1906 to act upon it. They remembered when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover, in conjunction with a more distinguished person than Lord Dunraven, attempted to dish the Nationalist Party. The scheme put forward in 1904 was not the Robertson scheme, but the scheme substantially of Mr. Bryce. Why should the voice of the nation be disregarded, and the clamour of a faction listened to? As a University it was a greater plan than any produced since. Mr. Gladstone made a complete acknowledgment of the necessity for a complete reform in University education in Ireland by introducing the Act of 1873. Speaking as a politician, he could not but rejoice that under the present system, wherever the young men of Ireland got university training of any kind, it came to them bitter with the sense of political injustice, and wherever there was an embittered intellect that intellect was devoted to the Nationalist cause. There had been Liberals who had proposed schemes for Irish Universities before, because they thought that by granting University education they would destroy Catholicity. There were others who had done so because they thought they would destroy the national spirit and disintegrate the national movement. An attempt was made by denying education to destroy all Catholicity and national feeling, and it failed; and if anybody thought that by the concession of the just rights of Ireland in this matter Irish Catholic or national feeling would be diminished they completely misunderstood the state of things in Ireland. They could not offer any great political advantage from putting this scheme of Mr. Bryce into operation, but if the Government did put it into operation they knew the difficulties the Chief Secretary would have to deal with on his own side of the House. He appealed to the Chief Secretary not to be frightened from his purpose by the Falstaffian army and the stage thunder of Trinity College. He knew there was a section of Liberals who had turned their backs on Gladstonian traditions, who would make the present a Government of half-beliefs and half-measures, and there might be a section who would press for the adoption of the Robertson scheme as against that of Mr. Bryce; but it had no more chance of success than had a scheme of Devolution as a substitute for Home Rule. He asked the Chief Secretary to deal with this matter in a large and courageous spirit. The opportunity presented itself, let the right hon. Gentleman inscribe his name by the side of that of the great leader of his Party, and lop off another branch from the upas tree of Protestant ascendency. He begged to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £2,100, be granted for the said service."—(*Mr. Kettle.*)

*Mr. GWYNN (Galway), in seconding the Motion, said he did not approach this question from a point of view identical with that of his hon. and learned friend. Connected as he was on the one hand by family ties with the great University of Dublin, and on the other by ties with the Irish Catholics, he spoke on this question with an almost painful division of interest; but though divided between those two interests, at least he would offer to the Committee his sincere opinion in what counsels he might give to the Government, which had made a pledge it had not yet shown any intention of fulfilling—a pledge that was positively and emphatically made. In the first place they found these Queen's Colleges of Cork, Galway, and Belfast short of equipment. They were established at a time when the requirements of University institutions were not so well understood as to-day, and the lack of success of those institutions naturally enough accounted for the disinclination to spend money upon them. Dr. Windle reported that where there were sixty laboratory students there was only accommodation for thirty. It was the same story all through. But they lacked many things that were more vital than equipment, and in the first place they lacked freedom. Their case seemed to him like that of the contemptuously condemned in Dante—neither for God nor against —for they could neither teach Christianity nor teach against it; they were hampered in every direction by the accursed system of compromise which English ideas had imposed upon Ireland. It extended to the ordinary affairs of life even. The men who conducted these colleges had not the rights of ordinary citizens; they had the *status* of civil servants. This came to his knowledge recently when he asked for the assistance of the president of one of the colleges at a public meeting held to discuss the question of primary education in Ireland. The president answered that he deeply sympathised with their aims, but he could not commit himself to take part in a meeting at which the policy of the Treasury would be challenged. That was the position to-day in those University institutions, and he put it to English Members whether that would be tolerated in any English University whatever. Would they establish for themselves a University such as they were good enough to give to Ireland? The colleges lacked freedom, but they lacked worse than that, they lacked life, they lacked students. Of course, the institution in Belfast, which the Presbyterians had been allowed to make into something of a Presbyterian College, had got, on the whole, its fair share of students; but the other colleges of Cork and Galway dragged out a miserable kind of life. In Galway where, he supposed, 95 per cent. of the population were Catholic, half the students in the college were Presbyterians who had come down from Belfast to get the scholarships for which the local people would not compete. How had the lack of students been caused? One had to go back to the original intention of these institutions, and he would refer to the words of Sir Robert Peel, spoken in that House, which expressly stated that—

> "in their colleges in the South and West of Ireland, no man would be mad enough to think of dispensing with the aid of the Catholic hierarchy."

Measures were taken which alienated the support of the Catholic hierarchy, and the Government, dispensing with it, proceeded to be the sole controlling influence in those colleges. It made the appointments itself, and governed and administered the institutions on the hopeful principle of compromise; it laid down the particular things which might be done, and with the things omitted, and which ought to have been done but were not done, they were not concerned. At the present time, at Cork, there was a kind of ray of hope, because there had been sent there a man of ability who was in sympathy with the general feeling of the population to which his college was intended to minister. It was the late Government, he thought, who appointed Dr. Windle, who had been intimately associated with the progressive University of Birmingham. Dr. Windle, being an Irishman, had willingly, he believed, sacrificed his career in England, and went back to be of service to his own country. And this was what he reported—

> "It would be an idle mockery for me to pretend that the college is or ever has been anything like the success that it might have been and might be made were the conditions under which it is placed of a more satisfactory character; was the college in fact as acceptable to the people of its district as the colleges in the different English towns are to the inhabitants of the district to which they belong?"

Dr. Windle's solution was that they should give to these colleges the kind of constitution which was given to the local colleges in England—say to such a University as existed in Birmingham; that was to say, the control was largely in the hands of the academic body itself, and with that control local popular bodies were associated. The same thing had been demanded in regard to the other Queen's Colleges in Ireland. The college of Galway, in his own constituency, was one of the colleges entirely out of touch with the population, and the moment Mr. Bryce's scheme was announced, Galway held meetings representing the whole province of Connaught. The first meeting was presided over by the Archbishop of Tuam, and it was attended also by Presbyterian and Protestant clergy, who demanded that the institution should be kept alive and brought into touch and sympathy with the surrounding country. The college staff itself, although it consisted in the greater part of gentlemen who were not Catholics, and who were isolated by religion and opinions from the population, passed a resolution demanding that the college should be given a different constitution, and at all events taken away from the Crown and given a popularly constituted body of academic representatives, who would act with representatives of county councils and representatives of the various clergy of the district. That was the Irish idea of the way in which they should settle this university question; it was to keep the Irish universities in touch with Irish life. He confessed that when he contemplated the British Government in Ireland, its various shifts and machineries, it seemed to him like a man trying by all the resources at his command to make his mill wheel run contrary to the flow of the stream. What was wanted for the Irish colleges was a decided change in their constitution, and the substitution of popular control for that at present exercised. If that were done, he thought there was no doubt that in Cork and Galway, where at present they had empty halls and money wasted, there would be full classes and money usefully and properly spent. He fully recognised that the demand for an Irish National University was not as keen as it ought to be; but the fault of that lay with the English Government. When education was withheld the loss was double; men lost not only education but the knowledge of its worth. They had insisted on establishing university institutions in Ireland which were of such a sort that the people could not go into them. The Irish were a parsimonious people, and it was not easy to get them to lay out money. They should have taught them that it was worth while spending money on education, as the Scotch had seen it was worth while. Who were the natural allies of the Government in such a matter? The clergy, often the only educated class in Irish countrysides. Yet institutions had been so designed as to make it impossible in conscience for the Catholic clergy to urge men into them. His hon. and learned friend had dealt with the proposition that the Catholic Church of Ireland was anxious to keep people in ignorance. That slander had been repeated so often that it unfortunately had the effect that an oft-repeated slander always had; nevertheless, he thought that by this time it should be fully and finally disposed of. He did not think he need deal with the proposition that the Catholic Church in Ireland was anxious to keep the people in ignorance; that by this time was pretty fully discredited. Reform was demanded both by the people and by those who conducted the Queen's Colleges; but supposing the reform were put before them to-morrow, supposing that the colleges were alive and fertile, the problem would not be solved. Ireland was absolutely clear that its need was a metropolitan university. There was, of course, Trinity College, to which as had been pointed out he was not sent. If he might explain, the sending of him to Oxford was an experiment, and the result of that experiment was that his four brothers went unanimously to Trinity College. Nothing bad about Trinity College would be heard from him. Trinity College was in a sense a metropolitan university, but while it had been established 300 years, only for 30 years had Catholics been allowed its privileges. He wanted to be perfectly candid. He personally regretted the decision which was taken in reference to Trinity College, and had urged on Catholics, even at this late hour, to rescind their decision to go to Trinity College. He was convinced, however, that it was not a religious difficulty only which stood in the way. Trinity College was Protestant and had been built up by Protestants in Ireland to conform with the narrow and in a sense anti-Irish views of Protestants. Besides, it was only fair to remember that at the time Catholics came to their decision about Trinity College the concessions which were made a year or two ago had not been made. If a mistake had been made then there were two parties to that mistake. He thought they might take it that that solution of the difficulty could be finally dismissed. They held there must be some university education provided in Dublin for Catholics. There was Mr. Bryce's scheme which had in its favour that it was approved by the Catholics, though he thought his hon. and learned friend had overstated his case when he said it was unanimously approved in Ireland. He would be glad in many respects to see that scheme carried through, for it would give Catholics what they needed, though he did not think it would be the best solution of the difficulty. If it was still under consideration he would suggest what was known as the two-college scheme, which was much more workable than the scheme suggested by Mr Bryce, which involved the establishment of a University with four colleges scattered over Ireland. If it was to be a university such as Mr Bryce proposed they would insist on the inclusion of Galway, making five colleges. There was also the Robertson scheme, and he had rejoiced to hear that scheme condemned. Many of his friends thought it would be wise to fall back on that scheme and to concentrate on the Royal University, but the Royal University had the worst possible name. He did not believe that scheme would be easier to carry through than Mr. Bryce's scheme. It proposed to constitute a university consisting of the three existing Queen's Colleges at Belfast, Galway, and Cork, and to found another college acceptable to Catholics in Dublin. It would be a university of four colleges, three of them Catholic and one Presbyterian. If he knew the Presbyterians of the north at all he was inclined to think that they would object to a university in which they would find themselves in a permanent minority. At the very best, supposing the Presbyterians accepted that position and did not put forward the demand that they should have half the chairs and seats on the council, in any case that university would be controlled by the kind of composite Board representing rival and conflicting interests which had been the curse of education in Ireland. He saw no advantage in that system. Politically it was difficult, academically it was unsound, and worst of all it did not, as his hon. and learned friend had said, appeal to the imagination of the Irish people, who would not thank them for the Royal University. There were only two logical and satisfactory solutions of this great question, and with one of them he had already dealt, namely, the suggestion to make Trinity College a national university; but that solution had been ruled out, because they had definitely the whole conscience and pride of Catholics arrayed against it. What was the second alternative? He would invite the attention of the Committee to this matter, because the other solution which he thought was far more statesmanlike, satisfactory and easier of accomplishment was precisely the solution which the Royal Commissions had ruled out of Court as impossible. And why? Not because anyone in Ireland would object seriously to a proposal to found, he would not say a Roman Catholic University, but a new university which Catholics would accept. He did not believe there was any objection to that scheme in Ireland, but there was in England. The Prime Minister said the other day that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland was going to spend the autumn in looking through Ireland for a solution of the university question, but if he would take his advice he would look much nearer home. The solution was to be found in this country, and in that House, and the whole issue rested with the Nonconformists of England. He wanted to make it as plain as possible what was meant by this claim for a National University—he refused to call it a Roman Catholic University. What was the scheme as defined by the most representative man who had spoken on the question in Ireland up to three or four years ago, when there was an institution existing in Dublin formed especially to discuss this question? At one of the meetings of this body an address was given by his hon. friend the Member for East Mayo — whose absence, and more particularly its cause, they all deeply deplored—before Mr. Bryce's scheme was born or thought of, in which he formulated his ideas as to how the university question should be settled in Ireland. The remarkable thing about it was that the Member for Mayo's views coincided precisely with those of the Leader of the Opposition. He began by quoting from a letter in which the Leader of the Opposition had formulated his view, which was to establish by a single Act two new teaching universities, one in Dublin and one in Belfast, on precisely similar lines, and differing in no particular except in the names of the gentlemen first appointed to serve on their respective governing bodies. His hon. friend went on to define the object as the creation of an extremely democratic university that would be adapted to the needs of poor men's sons—that was to say, a university not based on the type of Oxford or Cambridge, but rather on the type of the University which existed in Birmingham. For that university he claimed the priceless gift of free academic life and self-government which would ensure that it should be the genuine expression of national ideals. So long as Ireland was a Catholic country it followed naturally that the national intellect and national ideals would be Catholic. It was not proposed that there should be any tests in that university. He did not know that it was proposed to establish out of the money which would be granted by the State a chair of theology, but it was emphatically not necessary to such a scheme that the Catholics of Ireland should at least have the right to endow a chair of Catholic theology in connection with their national university. There would be no test needed so long as the university was predominantly Catholic, for the governing body would appoint none but Catholics to certain chairs. There was a great deal of talk about tests in regard to university matters, but the only test which had any influence was the spirit of the institution itself. It would be ridiculous in a university founded for Catholics to set up a chair in which the professor would give theological or philosophic teaching repugnant to the ideas of Catholics. A Catholic university was a thing which Ireland had demanded for many years—a separate national university It would have the negative advantage that it would injure no existing interest, it left Trinity College and Belfast College untouched. If the Presbyterians of Belfast claimed that their college should be enlarged and expanded, he thought the Nationalist Party would be very willing to support them in that scheme as a kind of corollary to their own claim. He thought he was entitled to say that any such scheme would not only not meet with opposition from Protestants in Ireland, but would get active help. He was in a position to say to the Committee in regard to such a proposal that it would be viewed with favour and receive support from the heads of the divinity school and of the great scientific schools in Trinity College itself. That was to say, if it was proposed to endow a separate university acceptable to Catholics such a proposal would neither be retrograde in point of religion nor in point of science. The proposal was solely opposed in England. It was a question of the conscience of the Nonconformists. Of course the Nonconformists might answer, "It is only the conscience of Catholics which prevents you from going into Trinity College to-day. Why should you ask us to concede what is a matter of conscience and grant a university which conflicts with our sense of what is right?" Consistency was a fine thing, but it was one thing to be consistent at your own expense and another to be consistent at another's expense. He submitted to Nonconformists who were against enlarging the power of the Church of Rome what the net result had been of the action taken by England—or inaction—in this matter. It had enormously increased the power of the Church of Rome in Ireland. They had in Ireland an educated clergy among an uneducated laity; trained men among untrained in any question of public business; and not only that, but what the Government did not do in Ireland the Catholic Church—and all honour to it—took and did in place of the Government. The Catholic Church supplemented the deficiency left by England's unwillingness. Where there was no Government or State institution the Catholic Church provided the institution itself. The result was that men like his hon. and learned friend had no choice but to be the pupil, not of a National University but of a Jesuit College. England gave to the Church of Rome the advantage of being an educated Church in a country which was denied the means of higher education, and more than that, they gave to the Catholic Church the absolute control of such higher education as existed. He understood there were Nonconformists willing to admit the contention that at present Trinity College was *de facto* Protestant, that Belfast was *de facto* Presbyterian, and they admitted that they deplored the fact. They said it was a regrettable thing that universities of such a type should exist, and their conclusion was that they would be no party to establishing a third college of such a reactionary type. That was an interesting position logically; it ignored the justice of the case. To say that the Catholics should have no university because if one were granted it must be as denominational as those possessed already by Protestants, seemed to him to be pushing logic to a ridiculous extent. It was said also that the claim of the Church of Rome was peculiar in Ireland. He fully admitted that, and the reason for it was to be found in history. Probably nowhere in Europe was the Catholic Church so strong as it was in Ireland. And why? The answer was to be found in centuries of oppression and persecution. They could not reason with the Irish people when it came to a matter of conscience They could not separate the Irish people from their priests. When the Irish people thought their priests were in the right there was no power in the world that would drive away that idea. In this question the Irish people had definitely taken their stand behind the priests. After all, it was right that the Irish should have the kind of institutions they wanted. That was simply the Liberal claim that majorities should rule. He could not understand how any Nonconformist who approved of the foundation of such a college as Mr. Bryce proposed to set up, should disapapprove of a university on precisely the same lines. And if one disapproved of any foundation on these lines, whether college or university, surely there was a conflicting principle involved. There was the higher principle of Liberalism and justice—that they ought to give to the people the right to choose for themselves. English Nonconformists wanted to force upon the people of Ireland a Liberalism which was not their own. The Catholic country of Belgium had decided to establish universities other than such as the Church approved of; but in this Belgium had made its own choice; it had not been forced by a power not its own into a step it did not desire. This seemed to him the logic of the situation, but he did not wish to rely solely on logic or to base his appeal on the weight of his own opinion. He appealed to Nonconformists to allow this question to be settled and to give the Government a free hand; to let it be known that if they did not exactly approve of all that the Irish people wanted, they would not at least object to its being granted. This Government had come into office with a great desire to do good to Ireland; but unfortunately, they had not been successful in their attempts in some respects; he appealed to their Nonconformist supporters to assist the Government to accomplish this achievment. He also appealed to every Member in the House to see that this great question should be settled, not on Party lines at all, but as a question between England and Ireland. From his own point of view he believed that the solution of the problem which he had advocated was a right scheme. He knew that there was not one ideal as to University education in Ireland, but three; and in his belief they would only get a perfect University, not by compromise, but by allowing each of the three great religious denominations to go their own way and work out their own salvation on their own lines.

SIR E. CARSON (Dublin University) said it was fully fifteen years since he first in that House advocated a settlement of the question of higher education in the interests of those who differed from him in religion in Ireland, and he really did not know how many speeches he had made on the subject from that day to this. To-day, owing to the manner in which the Resolution had been introduced in the eloquent speech of the hon. and learned Member, he felt very much tempted to give the go-by to his more pacific words on previous occasions, and enter the lists on behalf of Trinity College. That he should be prepared to do on some other occasion. He assured hon. Members he did not in the least shrink from it. This was a question, however, which had now come to that phase in Ireland in which it could only be settled by leaving out of question all bitterness on both sides, by taking a much wider and much higher view of their duties in the matter than, he thought, the hon. and learned Member for Tyrone had taken, and by trying to conciliate each other in their feelings as regarded the particular matters which necessarily arose in the settlement of the question. Since Mr. Bryce made his speech immediately before going as Ambassador to America, the question had entered upon an entirely new phase. They could not raise a question of this kind in the way in which Mr. Bryce raised it, put it forward as the settled policy of the Government, and leave the matter there. All they did by raising the question, if they did not settle it, was to leave the whole matter in a state of flux in Ireland, entirely to the detriment of higher education in that country. Taking his own University which he had the honour to represent: what had been the effect of Mr. Bryce's proposals upon Trinity College? The whole University had been agitated all through the course of this year. Naturally, and he thought properly, in self-defence they had been applying themselves to obtain assistance in England and elsewhere for the purpose of defeating Mr. Bryce's scheme; and he knew as a fact that there had been a disturbance of the whole educational forces of the University, because of the agitation which had arisen, and because of the doubts as to the future of higher education in Ireland. In addition to that the very considerable subscriptions which they were receiving towards new science schools had absolutely dried up, as nobody would contribute to an institution which was being threatened in material respects, and as to the future government of which no one was certain. In a third point the University was touched. He himself had seen a good deal of correspondence which proved to him that there were many people in Ireland who had determined, in consequence of the unsettled state of this question, to send their sons to Cambridge University instead of to Trinity College. How much greater was the unsettlement on the whole question from a national point of view in Ireland! Hopes and expectations had been raised, and people were waiting to see what was going to be done; and he took this opportunity of pressing on the Government and on the right hon. Gentleman who now held the office of Chief Secretary for Ireland that the time had really come when there ought to be no more academic discussions, but when an attempt should be made to find a practical solution. He ventured to think this was perhaps the most opportune moment, when people's minds in Ireland had been brought together upon this question, to attempt to do something towards a settlement. It was not for him to propound a plan. He was glad that that was a matter in much abler hands. He could sympathise with the right hon. Gentleman when he used what in older days he would have called his long vacation in finding a solution which would be just and generous and absolutely satisfactory to all those interested in the question. He did not himself believe that one absolutely satisfactory to everyone would be found; but he did believe the right hon. Gentleman would be able to find one which was fair and just, and would satisfy those really interested. Now, what was the question, and how did it arise? The hon. and learned Member who moved the reduction of the Vote gave a graphic description of the particularly backward condition of Trinity College and how it had failed entirely to meet the aspirations of the Irish people. The case for Trinity College was an absolutely clear and plain one. So far from Trinity College being the illiberal institution which was so often depicted. he ventured to say it stood in the forefront of all Universities for the liberality it had displayed, and the efforts it had made to meet the wants of those who sought education within its walls. Trinity College was founded as a Protestant institution, as hon. Members below the gangway knew, in the eighteenth century, long before any of the English Universities ever thought of opening its doors to students of all creeds. In 1872 and 1873 all tests were abolished, and for the last thirty-four years every office in Trinity College from top to bottom had been absolutely open to every creed without distinction and without test, whether the students were Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist, or Episcopalian. There was no distinction whatsoever.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): Is there no test for Members of Parliament?

SIR E. CARSON: No more test than for anyone else. They had, he continued, as far as Trinity College was concerned, even gone further. They had attempted to meet the situation by agreeing to set up in divinity separate denominationalism for each creed. They had done everything to try to attract students of all religions. What was there further they could do? It was said by the hon. and learned Member for East Tyrone that students refused to enter on grounds of national feeling. What was the real answer to the charge of want of national feeling in Trinity College? The Catholics of Ireland had been forbidden by the Catholic hierarchy to enter Trinity College; and was it fair now to turn round to Trinity College and say, "You are a Protestant institution, you are dominated by Protestant feeling, you are a Unionist institution and dominated by Unionist feeling" and to leave out of consideration the fact that Catholics with their Catholic feeling and Nationalists with their Nationalist feeling were not allowed by the Catholic hierarchy to go there? It was the Catholics in Ireland who were mainly the supporters of the Irish national feeling, and he had no doubt of the ideas of the majority of the Irish people. That he was right in the conclusion he drew was perfectly apparent from a paragraph in the Report of the Royal Commission that had just inquired into the matter, because they came to the unanimous opinion that it was impossible to recommend any change in the constitution of the College that would render it acceptable to the Roman Catholic episcopacy, inasmuch as the Standing Committee of the Roman Catholic Bishops had stated in a document they had forwarded that the Catholics of Ireland would on no account accept any mixed scheme of education. If the Roman Catholic hierarchy were not prepared to accept a change in Trinity College under a scheme of mixed education what justice was there in attacking Trinity College in relation to the system observed there at present? The Roman Catholic hierarchy themselves had been unable to suggest any scheme simply because they did not want a scheme of mixed education. When the Queen's Colleges were founded they were founded as absolutely secularist colleges, but no sooner was that done than the Roman Catholic hierarchy refused to allow Catholics to go there because they dubbed them "godless colleges." Therefore the Roman Catholic hierarchy would not have Trinity College nor mixed education, nor what they called "godless colleges." That was the difficulty they had to face. He would rather prefer Trinity College to go on year after year with undenominationalism in higher education, but that would not solve the question in Ireland. Secularist colleges had been tried, a system of mixed education in Trinity College was refused, and were they going to say that a certain number of people should be deprived of higher education? It was unstatesmanlike, and the longer a settlement of the question was delayed the more dangerous it was. The question could not be left unsettled, because they had been creating year after year great public bodies—county councils and so forth—controlled by the Irish people, and to a large extent by a Catholic population. Education was needed for the people and the officials, and it was a dangerous thing to leave the question in abeyance while at the same time they were creating offices and obligations which required qualifications of a very different character from those which were obtainable outside university education. There was no question which pressed more for a settlement than that of higher education, but the question was, how were they going to satisfy the demand? He could not see the difference between setting up a college acceptable to the vast majority of the Irish people, and setting up a university acceptable to the vast majority of the Irish people. The moment they eliminated that distinction from the controversy there was no reason for accepting the solution that had been propounded by Mr. Bryce. It was impossible to divide the interests of Dublin University and Trinity College, and bring within the scheme of Dublin University a new college acceptable to the Catholic portion of the community, and so have the effect of setting up a Catholic college in Dublin University. For years and years Trinity College had been emerging from denominationalism. From the moment they set up this college of Catholics, Trinity College would become nothing more than a Protestant College, and would be going back to absolute denominationalism. They did not want that. They wanted to be left alone in Trinity College just as they were at the present moment, leaving their doors open to anyone who liked to come. But that was one of the smallest difficulties the Government would have to encounter if they persisted in Mr. Bryce's scheme. They would have to break up the two existing universities and the Royal University with some thousands of graduates, and they would have to break up Dublin University as it now existed, and that was no small task even for the right hon. Gentleman who now had the honour to hold the office of Chief Secretary. But when the right hon. Gentleman had broken up the Royal University and the Dublin University as they at present existed, what was he going to put in their place, and here would come the real crux of the whole situation? What was to be the governing body of the Government's new institution which would propose something satisfactory to the Royal University men, the Dublin University men, and Trinity College? He defied anybody to get any governing body in any sense universal, which would be satisfactory to all of those people. Mr. Bryce's scheme seemed to be that there should be different governors elected by the different denominations, and then these were to be kept in order by some nominated members just in the same way that Dublin Castle was said to look after the Irish Local Government Board. He did not think a nominated body for most purposes was a good institution, but he was perfectly certain it would be a fatal one for a university. The whole government of the University would under it become a matter of compromise. There was no room in the progress of higher education for compromise at all. Each body must be allowed to pursue its own ideals. The moment they got the nominated or the political element the whole ideal of what a university really was would perish, because outside interference would be inconsistent with the idea of a university. The Irish Secretary would have to consider what he was going to do with the existing thousands of graduates in the Universities. Were they to be called graduates of the late Royal University of Ireland or graduates of Dublin University, where they had never been? What was to be done with the graduates of the old Dublin University, like himself?

MR. BIRRELL: Leave you alone.

SIR E. CARSON said it was not leaving him alone if they took away his University or made him a joint graduate with members of the Royal University. Perhaps the Chief Secretary might suggest that they should become graduates of Oxford or Cambridge. He assured the right hon. Gentleman that he much preferred remaining a graduate of his own University. Then there was another difficulty. They would have to find out what was the real difference between Trinity College, which they were going to leave alone, and Dublin University. He had studied this question very carefully, and he had not been able to decide himself how it should be settled. When they proceeded to find out what belonged to the University and what belonged to Trinity College they would have a task which would take many years to solve. Why should all this attack be made on Dublin University? If that House set up, as he thought they ought to set up, a college for the Catholics of Ireland, there was no reason why they should not be able to set up a University. But there was another alternative, which was to set up a college in the Royal University, and make that University a teaching University instead of a merely examining University as at present. All he could say as representing Trinity College was that they took up no selfish position in this matter. They said there was no reason why they should be interfered with in the work they were doing and had done. The Royal Commission had reported that no alteration in their government or their system would meet with the approval of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in Ireland, and they said that, while they wished to be left in a position that would enable them to allow all students to enter their doors, they had at the same time no selfish feeling with regard to the matter. Of course, if Trinity College was going to be attacked and the Government persisted in the one solution which alone would affect them, which they believed would be inimical to their interests and prevent their progress, and create an entirely different idea of University education—while they would be prepared to assist in the creation of a University which would be a University in the best sense, acceptable to those who differed from them in religion, they would be bound to offer the most hostile opposition to any system that would interfere with the work they had endeavoured to carry out. He pressed on the Chief Secretary that in a new departure where a great principle was going to be settled it was invaluable that that departure should be made and that settlement arrived at not only with the good-will of those who were going to benefit by the settlement, but also with the unanimous good wishes of all concerned in the higher education of Ireland.

MR. GORDON (Londonderry, S.) said he did not think there was much difference between those interested as to the necessity of the question of University education for Ireland being dealt with, but they differed materially on the methods which they thought ought to be applied. They desired the same end, but to attain it by different means. A good many people in Ireland believed there should be no constitution of either a denominational college or a denominational university. That was the plain and simple proposition they put forward as an article of faith in reference to education. There had never been in Ireland any system of education, either primary, secondary or university, for which money had been provided by the State, carried on on denominational lines, and they strongly objected to such a principle being introduced now. It was contrary to what existed in every country in Europe. It was contrary to the settled convictions of the English people, and he did not think, therefore, that either the English people or those who represented them in that House should impose on the Irish people who objected to it a denominational system of University education. They had their own children to educate and their own views and a right to express those views in that House. This was a question which ought to be above all Party considerations, because it affected not only their present prosperity but the prosperity of the country for many years to come. The House of Commons might take it from him that what was wanted by the establishment of a Roman Catholic college was a denominational system in the University of Ireland. Trinity College, which had existed for 300 years, was, no doubt, Protestant in its origin, but it had gladly been receiving Roman Catholic students and educating them, and thirty years ago all tests were abolished. From that day to this by gradual process that had been going on, all restraints and restrictions which could prevent students from entering its walls were being removed. What was the position of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in respect to that? They would not accept any scheme of mixed education in Trinity College. It might be thought there was something peculiar about Trinity College itself, but the same position was taken up with regard to the old Queen's University, which should never have been abolished. That was a great teaching University in which the student was bound to reside and attend three-quarters or four-fifths of the lectures every session. It was founded without any test or religious bias of any kind. It was absolutely free, non-sectarian and non-denominational, and every religious body had a right at its own expense to promote means of teaching its own religion to students of its own denomination. That was accepted by the Roman Catholic hierarchy, and a Roman Catholic was the first president of that University. But after a time it was discovered that the hierarchy had not sufficient control over the education given in the Queen's Colleges. It was idle to say that this question was not at its very foundation a question as to a denominational University. In 1905 the matter came before the House in the same way and a vast number of the Members who then sat on the Opposition side voted, as he intended to vote on that occasion, against the proposition which was put forward in support of a denominational college or University in Ireland. He wondered what view those Members adopted to-day. He anticipated, at all events, that those who represented the Nonconformist people of England would adhere to their principles, and that they would not impose upon Ireland or give any vote which would impose upon that country a denominational system of education. Mr. Bryce, before he left the Irish Office, made what would have been a very good Second Reading speech on a Bill if it had been before the House, in which he announced all his views in reference to University education in Ireland. When he had finished his statement the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "I personally believe it [the scheme which he had propounded] to be the only scheme politically possible under the conditions I have already stated, and I can hold out no hope that any other will be proposed by the present Government."

Were they to take that as literally accurate, and to assume that the right hon. Gentleman who now filled Mr. Bryce's place would accept the scheme, and would not himself come forward with some new scheme? Mr. Bryce went through all the various suggestions made by the two Commissions which had been appointed, and then made the statement that there were two conditions which had to be observed in reference to any scheme of University education in Ireland. The first was that the scheme should be such as to meet the wishes of Irish Catholics, remove their grievances, and be acceptable to Irish Catholic opinion. The second condition, and the important one, was that the solution must be such as a Liberal Government could propose consistently with its own principles—that was to say, free education, non-sectarian education, perfect equality between the different religious parties, no tests, and no religious restrictions of any kind whatever. If that were carried out honestly would it meet the wishes and requirements of the Roman Catholic hierarchy of Ireland?

MR. GWYNN: Certainly.

MR. GORDON: Would perfect equality between the different religious parties be accepted? What did Mr. Bryce say about his college? He laid down two conditions which every man like himself would at once acquiesce in. But he then went on to say that it was to have a majority of Roman Catholic professors, and at the same time secure the assent of the Roman Catholic hierarchy. How was he to do it? By violating one of the essential conditions of his second proposal—the condition, namely, of perfect religious equality between the two religious bodies. He would start a college acceptable to Roman Catholics in Ireland by giving them a majority of its professorships, and a majority on its governing body. Was not that creating a new denominational college? It was as clear as daylight that the Roman Catholic hierarchy, which would not allow its members to go into Trinity College on any conditions, who would not accept the Queen's Colleges and Queen's University, which were upon a purely non-sectarian and undenominational basis, were not likely to accept the colleges based on the principles of Mr. Bryce's scheme. Why should they accept these colleges? Would they be willing to do it? If this were an honest statement by Mr. Bryce, what was intended to be done was to re-establish Queen's University on the exact principles on which the Queen's Colleges were founded. If that were done they would get rid of the denominational question, and there would be some reality and honesty in the suggestions put forward to create a fourth college. But would any man who knew the state of affairs in Ireland stand up and say that they should create a college in that country exactly on the same terms as those upon which the Queen's Colleges were created, and then turn round, and, in the same breath, say they knew it would be acceptable to the Roman Catholic hierarchy? He was quite satisfied that the right hon. Gentleman now occupying the position of Mr. Bryce would never make such a statement as that. They must have something very different from the conditions laid down by Mr. Bryce, if they were to satisfy the Roman Catholic hierarchy. If that were the state of affairs, he for one would be only too glad if the right hon. Gentleman could show a reasonable way out. But he wanted the matter to be on no uncertain lines—let them know what it was to be, denominational or undenominational. Let them be clear and definite about it, for whether it was a denominational college or a denominational University, it came to pretty much the same thing in the end. If they started a denominational college in the Dublin University, they would have Trinity College denominational on its side. What were the arguments put forward in Ireland? It was said that Belfast College was Presbyterian. He entirely denied that. It was purely undenominational in its foundation, character, and work. It happened that there were more Presbyterians in Belfast and in the adjoining counties than there were members of other denominations, and they attended the college, which was equally open to all. The appointment of the president was in the hands of the right hon. Gentleman. He did not know what the Chief Secretary did, but so far as he was concerned he would be surprised if the right hon. Gentleman suggested for one moment that he and his Government, or any Government, would turn these colleges in Ireland into denominational colleges. If the right hon. Gentleman stated openly that they were to be treated as denominational colleges, it would be the first time it had ever been stated on the floor of the House by anyone in a responsible position.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): Will the hon. Gentleman promise me he will not create any disturbance if the post becomes vacant and a Jesuit priest is appointed?

MR. GORDON said that, as the right hon. Gentleman well knew, he had no power to create a disturbance or do anything else. The right hon. Gentleman and those who represented him in the Government had the power of applying the law in reference to the appointments to these colleges. He had never had anything to do with appointments one way or another, and knew nothing about them. If the right hon. Gentleman took the view that these were denominational colleges in their inception, he was rather disposed to think, from what he had said, that the right hon. Gentleman was inclined to favour the establishment of a denominational college in Ireland. He supposed the right hon. Gentleman wanted to have an Irish Catholic University; but would that be agreeing with the principles which Mr. Bryce had laid down, that no one religious body was to be favoured more than another? He would be very curious to hear the statement of the right hon. Gentleman, and still more curious to see what course his followers would pursue, if he did make a statement. The position of the Roman Catholic Church and of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland was well understood. So far as the latter Church was concerned, her Assembly consisted of 800 members, and apparently, in a meeting of about 400, a resolution of a very general character was passed by a majority, he believed, of four to three, though he did not know the figures; he believed that was about the majority. The resolution was general, and in no way understood as a definite and well agreed upon statement of the position of affairs in regard to University education in Ireland, nor of what the views of the General Assembly were. They certainly had always been against the establishment of a denominational college or University, and he did not think that they had ever receded from that position. He asked Members of the House who were opposed to the establishment of a denominational college to vote against the Motion which had been brought forward. The only test in connection with Queen's College was not a religious test at all. It was a declaration which a professor had to make that he would not do anything which would interfere with the religion of the students who attended his lectures.

MR. GWYNN asked if the hon. Member could state that there was no clause in the constitution of the Queen's Colleges forbidding the teaching of anything contrary to the Christian religion.

MR. GORDON read the full text of the declaration which the professors of the Queen's Colleges had to sign, in which they declared that in lecturing and examining, and the performance of their duties they would abstain from advancing any doctrines derogatory to revealed religion. Was that a test? [Cries of "Yes."] It was not what was ordinarily understood by a test. It was simply a declaration on the part of the professor that he would not interfere in any way with the views or opinions of any member of his class in reference to religious or political questions. There was no suggestion that he should even state what religion he belonged to, or what beliefs he held. Queen's Colleges had been founded upon pure non-sectarianism. It had been said that the professors were like civil servants, and that if they were going to pay for these professors out of State money they would be in exactly that position. Surely if they appointed men to the new colleges they would have to put them in exactly the same position. Those, however, were not arguments which suggested that there was something in the nature of religious tests, and he could not see how that fact affected the controversy.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) said he did not propose to say a word on University education from an abstract point of view. From his point of view the debate was either a tragedy or a farce. For the first time in thirty years the Government had undertaken in the King's Speech to deal during the session with the question of Irish University education, and yet for four mortal hours a debate, mainly platitudinous, had proceeded on the merits of different kinds of University education. What he wanted to know was why faith was not being kept with Ireland by His Majesty's Ministers. He had not risen to discuss whether Trinity College was good, bad, or indifferent, or whether they should have Mr. Bryce's or Lord Robertson's scheme. What he wished to know was why had the King's plighted word to be broken? There was a pledge, solemnly made, that they would give to Ireland in the present session a University Bill. Instead of giving Ireland the promised University Bill, without any explanation, or apparently any demand for any, the Prime Minister had stated that he would implore the Irish Secretary to inform himself on the merits of the question during the course of next autumn. If that was the position, what was the meaning of the words in His Majesty's Speech and what was the meaning of a Law Officer of the Crown going down to North Tyrone and obtaining the votes of Catholics and Nationalists upon the basis that the King's Speech was going to be adhered to? What was the good of twaddling about the merits of the schemes when they had a definite promise of a proposal? The words he referred to were inserted in the Speech from the Throne after Mr. Bryce had left to take up his duties in America, and after the present Chief Secretary had been inducted into his present office. When this promise had been made under the Royal signet, what were they to think of a Government with its majority of 200 or 300 breaking faith with them upon this matter, and telling them that they intended to send the Chief Secretary upon his travels in Ireland to examine this question in the course of the long vacation—

> "Your attention will be called to measures for further associating the people of Ireland with the management of their domestic affairs."

He thought the Government had been betrayed upon that question. He said to the Chief Secretary three months ago that he thought he was more to be pitied than blamed, and his sympathies were with him still. He had opposed the Bill from the start, and if the right hon. Gentleman had consulted him he would have replied in four words "This won't do." [AN HON. MEMBER: There is only three words.] Yes, there were four words. The King's Speech further stated—

> "Your attention will be called to measures for further associating the people of Ireland with the management of their domestic affairs, and for otherwise improving the system of government in its administrative and financial aspects. Proposals will also be submitted for effecting a reform of University education in Ireland, whereby I trust that the difficulties which have so long retarded the development of higher education in that country may be removed."

Why had that promise been broken, and why were they to be put off by the statement that the Chief Secretary would be sent upon his voyage to Ireland? If the Government had said that Ireland had rejected the Council Bill and deserved nothing else, that would perhaps have been logical. But that had not been said. What the Government said was that they would give Ireland a University Bill next year. The rejection of the Irish Council Bill had lessened the Government cargo. Surely, therefore, the Government had time to deal with the University question this session. The

Solicitor-General for Ireland had won the most remarkable battle anyone had won in Ireland in his time. Would he have won it but for the paragraph regarding University education in the King's Speech? Would he have got Catholics—some of whom were old men, one of whom died before he was able to vote and three of whom died next day—to consent to vote for him, even though they had to be carried on the shoulders of stalwart men, if it had been known that the pledge of King Edward was to be broken? That pledge had been broken without cause and without explanation. He could understand the explanation given for the defects in the Irish Council Bill, namely, that leading men like the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Secretary of State for War, and the Under-Secretary for the Colonies had, during the hustings period, watered down Home Rule to a particular level, and therefore they were not bound to give them any satisfactory measure. That was logical and intelligible, but did they give any promise on the question of a University Bill? It was not now a question of the ingredients of the Bill, or whether it should be a non-Trinity College Bill or one including Trinity College; it was a question of getting a Bill at all. When the Prime Minister stated that he would send the right hon. Gentleman on his travels through Ireland in the course of the recess to make up the mind of the Government on this question, did he realise the pledge he had given in his own speech? Did he realise that in January or February last the Government had apparently made up their minds to some University scheme? What was it? This was a solemn matter. The Government should not palter with the House of Commons, or with the constituencies; and they should not get their Ministers elected on false pretences. For three or four hours nothing had been talked in the debate but academic twaddle. One would have thought that the question was back in its place thirty or forty years ago. It was not a matter of forcing a closed door. The door had already been forced. The promise of an Irish University Bill had been signed, sealed, and delivered. There it was in the King's Speech. Why did not the Government deliver the goods? The Chief Secretary might say that he could not take anybody into his confidence in the matter; that he had been lured to his destruction in the case of the Irish Council Bill, and therefore he could not be sure that the same fate would not await him with regard to the Irish University Bill. Of course the right hon. Gentleman might be told in private that his Bill was an admirable measure, and in public that it would not do at all. If that was the right hon. Gentleman's difficulty let him say so. But he told the right hon. Gentleman that there were forces in Ireland who, if he brought in his Bill, would stand at his back in spite of any paltering politicians. For his part he took his stand upon the promise of the King. The question at issue in the debate was not whether Trinity College should be included in the Bill or left out. It was, were His Majesty's Government going to keep their plighted word?

*Mr GOOCH (Bath) said the hon. and learned Member for North Louth had pointed out that this matter of a University for Ireland was referred to in the King's Speech, but he would remind the hon. Member that it was impossible that all the Bills promised in the King's Speech could be introduced that session. The hon. Member asked whether the Goverment were going to introduce and carry a Bill dealing with Irish University education, and the important thing was whether they would do that before a dissolution. He hoped the Chief Secretary would announce in unmistakeable terms that it was his intention to do so, and if he did then all the rhetoric of the hon. Member for North Louth was beside the point. He hoped that the debate that afternoon would tend to hasten the matter, and a great deal of what the mover and seconder of the reduction said would find a ready echo among Members of the Liberal Party. The mover and seconder spoke more of the blindness of English statesmen and rather less of the considerable difficulties which Irish Catholics had put in their way. It was only fair in dealing with this difficult and complex question to remember that there were two sides to it. The speeches they had heard that afternoon, and the Reports of the Commissions, made it absolutely clear that there was a real and irresistible demand for this reform. They had been tinkering at it since 1793, when Trinity College was thrown open to

Roman Catholics. Two years later Maynooth was established. Perhaps it was not known to some hon. Members that it had originally a secular branch as well as a clerical branch, but unfortunately the secular had a very short existence. Then they came many years later to the "godless colleges," and it was only fair to the memory of Sir Robert Peel, who created them in 1845, to say that they owed at any rate a debt of gratitude to him for good intentions. It was a sad story, and he thought the saddest chapter in it was that of the unsuccessful, though meritorious, attempt to start the Royal University, an effort in connection with which the name of Cardinal Newman would be gratefully remembered. A charter could not be got, and money did not come in so well as it should have done. The only remains of that attempt was the Jesuit College at St. Stephen's Green. Finally, in 1879, Beaconsfield created the so-called Royal University. The Queen's Colleges and the Royal University stood as monuments of the good intentions of English statesmen rather than as a successful solution of the question of Irish university education. It was exactly forty-one years since Lord John Russell's Government first attempted to deal with this matter, and for forty years Chief Secretaries had strongly advocated the creation of either a college or a university. When it was remembered that an overwhelming majority of the Robertson Commission and the Fry Commission were Protestants, and that both reported in favour of Catholic claims, he thought that ought to predispose fair-minded men to the favourable consideration of the question. He regretted to hear the mover of the Resolution speak as he did about Trinity College, Dublin, because he prejudiced his own case. The idea of a number of Liberal Members was that Trinity College should be widened in such a way as to make it acceptable to Catholic students, and there was a considerable body of Catholic opinion in Ireland perfectly ready to take advantage of such a step. Trinity College was willing to go further than it had gone already, but in spite of that there were fundamental difficulties in the way of Irish Catholics accepting the proposals. The first was that the intellectual atmosphere of Trinity College, the scientific conception of a university, was entirely different from that which ordinary Catholics in Ireland or elswhere approved. The atmosphere was very much too free for the vast majority of the leaders of Catholic opinion in Ireland. There was no doubt that many Irish Catholics regarded the atmosphere of that college as dangerously free. The second point was that Trinity College was still very largely anti-Nationalist and it could not become suitable for Nationalists. Dr. Traill, the Provost, said there were two nations in Ireland, and the sooner people in England realised that the better for everybody. That was the real reason why Catholics would not go to Trinity College. The evidence given before the recent Commission which interested him most was that which showed that Trinity College had absolutely boycotted the study of Irish history, literature and archæology. At the present time there were hundreds, if not thousands, of valuable manuscripts in the library of Trinity College which had never been examined. Some years ago a Catholic university for Ireland meant something which many Englishmen could not accept, but it now meant an institution without tests, a governing body nominated at first, but before long elected by the young men who had acquired honours at the University, and a theological faculty, if one was created, supported entirely by private contributions. The hon. Member for Galway had quoted from a most interesting speech, which the hon. Member for Mayo, E., had made some two years ago, and which was the best statement of what Liberal Irish Catholics really meant when they put forward a demand for a national university. Stress must be laid on the word National, not on the word Catholic. Of course, a university in a Catholic country would necessarily be Catholic; but the hon. Member for East Mayo said he did not believe that the Bishops would interfere in the management of the University once in fifty years. He was so eager for a solution of this university question that he was prepared to support the Government in carrying out either the Bryce or the Robertson scheme; but his feeling was that he would greatly prefer a solution that did not run violently counter to the wishes of Trinity College. Between the two alternatives he did not think it was the duty of any private Member to choose. The hon. Member for Galway went in for a university on

Catholics. There remained, therefore, only two solutions of that question. Candidly his own strong preference was for the creation of a Catholic University without any tests either for teachers or students, with a preponderance of laymen on the governing body, and without any *ex officio* representation of ecclesiastics. If ecclesiastics were to come in, they could be put in by the laymen, but he would leave the constitution entirely free, so that it might by degrees take the colour of the laymen, who would form the majority of the graduates. The reason why he believed in such a university as the desirable solution was that, if the Roman Catholics were given a university of their own, they would be put upon their mettle, they would feel that it lay with themselves to make or mar it. They would be on their trial in the eyes of the world, and it would be a point of honour with them to do their best. The other solution was, of course, that of the Robertson Commission—a newly-constructed Royal University, a teaching university, comprising four constituent residential colleges—the three Queen's Colleges and a new Catholic College in Dublin, generously and handsomely equipped. This, he believed to be the line of least resistance, and it was mainly on that ground that he had twice affixed his signature to a Report proposing that solution.

Such a federal university would doubtless by a natural process of development evolve itself into separate universities when the colleges became strong enough to stand alone. He would now put it to the House in all seriousness that the matter was not only one of sentiment. It was also a matter of urgency. Year after year had gone by. The equity of the Catholic demand had been acknowledged by statesmen on both sides of the House. Since 1886 five Chief Secretaries, representing various political opinions, had recognised the claim. In the Home Rule debates of 1893 the principle was accepted and passed without a division. Meanwhile Commissions had been appointed. Nothing had been done. Could they wonder that hope deferred brought with it exhausted patience? Each year's delay intensified the grievance. People were sick at heart with waiting. They were inclined to clutch at any offer, even at Mr. Bryce's scheme, profoundly as they disliked it. Anything, they felt, was better than things as they were. The time had surely come when action was possible. In Ireland an agreement on this question had now been more nearly arrived at than ever before. He hailed with pleasure the Chief Secretary's recent announcement that he had hopes next session of finding a settlement which would meet with general assent. As a Protestant he maintained that the State should respect the rights of conscience of Roman Catholics in the matter of university education as it did in all else. As a Unionist he desired to remove the one reproach which, in his judgment, still clung to them as Unionists. He had always held—he still held—that in that House every legitimate grievance of Ireland could be redressed; that all creeds and classes could find justice and shelter under the Imperial Parliament. As an Irishman he looked out upon the waste of mental life in Ireland, and thought of the pity of it; the rich intellectual endowments of the race starved for lack of sustenance, intellect undisciplined and often misguided, powers of intellect which when trained and touched with emotion, as the Irish intellect could be, were capable of any achievement. The love of learning, shown even under the penal laws in the hedge schools of Connaught—all this was now running to waste, perhaps ebbing away. Not so long ago Lecky mentioned in that House how in his youth it was no uncommon thing to come across a peasant in rags who could repeat a book of Homer and was familiar with the whole of Virgil. Now there were few people probably who could repeat anything except perhaps the pages of the *Freeman's Journal*—good stuff, no doubt, in its way, but a different order of literature. Moreover, the sociable Irish spirit, the spirit of comradeship and good fellowship, could find no university outlet, or next to none, for young Catholics. College memories meant for most of them the recollection of the examinations they had passed or of those in which they had failed. At this moment, indeed, there would seem to be a quickening of intellectual life in Ireland, a mental awakening. There were signs that the younger generation would not always be content to be fed upon the husks of politics or on examination questions. What was to be the outcome of this stir and ferment? Who could say? But in any case these intellectual gifts and energies, dormant but never dead, should be strengthened, disciplined, and worked for the good of the country. The wealth of England lay in her mines and material resources. The wealth of Ireland for the most part lay hidden, still hidden, in the brains of her children. Let her have the means to make use of that latent treasure. They demanded university education for Catholics not as a luxury for the rich—the rich could, and did, send their sons to England—but as the necessity of the poor; it would give the longed-for opportunity of bringing even to the cottage door the best learning that the land could offer.

*MR. MASSIE (Wiltshire, Cricklade) said it was a somewhat distasteful position, and, as he gathered from the speeches that he had had the pleasure of listening to that afternoon, an unpopular position in the eyes of the portion of the House that he had now the honour of addressing, that he should appear unfriendly or even be critical towards proposals that were made for the higher education of the Irish people—proposals made in their name. He would be grieved indeed, and he would resent it, if he were put down as indifferent or apathetic in this matter. He earnestly longed to see a truly democratic university in Ireland; but he was not prepared to rule out those solutions that had been ruled out without ceremony that afternoon, and least of all was he prepared to rule out the possible solution of the expansion and nationalisation of Trinity College; though he was perfectly aware that to leave Trinity College alone would be welcome to the hearts of the friends of that college who were then present. He knew that Trinity College had hitherto been boycotted by the Roman Catholic hierarchy; and that led him to say that, in the debate in which they were taking part that day, and in the debate that occurred early in last session, certain questions very much to the point were either inadequately answered or not answered at all. For instance, why had the Holy See felt at liberty to permit Catholics to reside at Oxford and Cambridge and in the Universities of America, while it had refused the same permission in connection with Trinity College, Dublin? Again, why should the bishops in Ireland condemn a mixed education which would bring Catholics and Protestants to meet and mingle together, when their fellow bishops in the United States of America and in other parts of the world did not condemn such an association? Why, again, should the bishops demand a Catholic atmosphere for secular instruction, even, for instance, of education in agriculture, when practically elsewhere this atmosphere was not provided by the State, even in Roman Catholic States? Were they to regard this separatism as an Irish idea, when they knew that the Irish Catholic was the most genial and the most companionable of all Catholics in the world? Was it that his geniality was a special peril? Again, what were Irish ideas? Were they to take Irish ideas to be the ideas of Cardinal Cullen—because they could not brush him aside; he was the founder of the present dominant *régime* in Ireland—were they, then, the ideas of Cardinal Cullen, or the ideas of Bishop O'Dwyer, while the Ultramontane section was the ruling power in ecclesiastical matters in Ireland? Or were they to take as Irish ideas the ideas of the Roman Catholics in Grattan's Parliament, or of Young Ireland with Davis and Duffy at their head, or of the late Michael Davitt, or of half the bishops of Ireland at the synod of Thurles before the wave of Ultramontanism came in? And they most remember that the synod of Thurles was held after years of oppression. And why should he regard the Ultramontane domination in Ireland as permanent? And why should he believe that even now these were the ideas of the mass of the people of Ireland, when Dr. Delany, in his evidence in 1906, on being asked whether his judgment was also the judgment of the people of Ireland, said that the Irish people had not had an opportunity of being consulted? Again, in the absence of evidence that the faith and morals of Roman Catholic students had been undermined in the unsectarian colleges of Ireland, why should not the Irish priesthood have proved as brave, with the special hold they had upon their people, as the Nonconformists at Oxford and Cambridge—the Nonconformists who did not ask for a University for themselves, but, knowing the inevitable risks that awaited them, faced those risks at Oxford and Cambridge, and by their presence and scholarly distinction had succeeded in changing the atmosphere and almost revolutionising the governing bodies in those Universities? Why, lastly, should the Irish priesthood charge the English Government with having deprived the Irish people of University education when that deprivation had been the act of the Irish priesthood itself? He had not seen convincing answers to any of these questions, and since the debate of last year things that had happened made the answers more urgently required. The Commission of 1906 had evidence laid before them that a considerable body of the Irish laity would gladly send their sons to Trinity College if they could do so with the approbation of their Church; and they might fairly assume that more of that evidence would have been given if more Irishmen had felt free to speak. And they might also fairly assume that more sons of Ireland would have been sent to Trinity College if the overtures of Trinity College, made in 1903, had been accepted by the Irish priesthood, namely, the provision of Catholic teachers for Catholic students on the same terms as for episcopal students or Presbyterians, the provision of a Catholic chapel within the precincts of Trinity College, Dublin, and the provision of a Roman Catholic divinity school. What had Cardinal Logue replied to these overtures? He had replied that he would not be a party to any such arrangement. And so they had still this ecclesiastical objection to that mixed education which would bring Catholic and Protestant to meet and mingle together. Objection had been taken, as he had said before, to mixed education even in agriculture. Education, in a word, must be under the ægis of the Catholic Church, so that the faith and morals of Catholics should not be injured—that was to say, under the control of the Roman Catholic bishops. Bishop O'Dwyer, or it might have been the Bishop of Clonfert, said, in his evidence in connection with the appointment of professors, that he believed that any average body of Irish laymen would defer to the bishops in such matters; so in the last resort they had not academic control, but episcopal control. And this brought him to the point on which he wished to lay stress. Such an arrangement as he had depicted, not an academic but an episcopal control, was practically unparalleled in the civilised world in connection with State Universities. The modern spirit was a scientific spirit, and this scientific spirit pervaded universities as they were now generally conceived and conducted. From that position they did not recede, and he thought they never should recede. Investigation must be free. Teachers and students must not be tied and bound by chains which hampered the discovery of truth. The hon. and learned Member who moved the Resolution had spoken of the great scientist Pasteur. Let him remind the House that Pasteur's scientific work, unhampered as it was, was done in France, where bishops had no control over State universities. Discovery of truth was the passion of modern times. He might call it a holy passion, because most Christian men now admitted that no scientific truth could really be hostile to religion. Catholicism, he would not say that, but Ultramontanism and Vaticanism demanded that their religion, as they now conceived it, should regulate, and therefore interfere with, the pursuit of scientific truth. Bishop O'Dwyer said that there was no security in the unsectarian colleges of Ireland that secular science should be taught without infringement of Catholic doctrine. Dr. Delany, the head of the Jesuit College in Dublin, had stated that an objectionable professor would not be prevented from appointment merely on account of his opposition to Christian views, but because the science that he taught was not science at all. Dr. Delany further gave it as his opinion that Haeckel, the German Professor of Biology, was absolutely and totally unscientific. So that with episcopal control it might fall to the lot of a bishop who knew nothing about science to decide what the value of scientific teaching was, and he would be able to secure a professor who would take his side upon the subject. Investigators under such a system would live and move and have their being not in dry light but in a coloured medium. Their teachings and their books would be under episcopal censorship. Upon denominational grounds, as Dr. Delany said, they would be appointed, and of course they might on denominational grounds have to resign because, as Dr. Delany put it, "denominationalism was the essence of the claim." A scientific professor might indeed be allowed to work with his microscope, but he must not allow his imagination to go free. He must put a knife to the throat of his theory, even if his theory was simply an experiment in the direction of truth. Just as Galileo suffered for his theory as to the motion of the earth, so Darwin might have suffered for his theory of evolution; Gardiner might have suffered for his history of the Stuarts; and Herbert Spencer might have suffered for his "Data of Ethics." It was too late in the history of the world to allow such results from episcopal control. Trinity College, Dublin, had its faults, just as Oxford and Cambridge had, where Catholics were allowed to reside. But he believed that Trinity College breathed the air of freedom of investigation. Were they to go back, to surrender to reaction, and assign a public endowment to a system under which natural, moral, and historical science might be in obscurantist bondage? That was not a real university in the proper sense of the term, and no State endowed such a university. In the sacred name of education, some of them, at any rate, declined to found such a university with public money. Whoever desired to found such a misnamed university let them found it themselves at their own expense. Just as he was opposed to two hostile universities, so likewise was he opposed to two colleges which would be in conflict one with the other. For a time he was taken with Mr. Bryce's scheme because he thought that the two colleges working together in Dublin would tend to union and would have the effect of bringing together the two classes of men, Protestants and Catholics, and he thought fondly that the more progressive college would exert an influence for good upon the other. He could not help feeling now that by having two opposing colleges they would only be crystallising the differences now existing, and that they would be making two camps between which the best condition of things would be an armed neutrality. If they had professors in common there would be a conflict between Catholic and Protestant in the choice of those professors. As to enlightenment the pace would be regulated by the slower of the two colleges. Trinity College was not what it ought to be, but he thought it had in it the making of a national University. Its governing body should be far more open than it was. It should be open to a continual flow of flesh blood, and he thought that flow might come if some of the recommendations of the late Royal Commission could be carried into effect. It was useless to find fault with some parts of the curriculum of Trinity College; because in nationalising that college the curriculum could easily be altered and improved. Trinity College already sheltered beneath its roof a great variety of students, and it was the fault of Catholics themselves that that variety was not much more distinctly marked. He thought that Trinity College had much to its credit in having liberalised itself step by step, from time to time, and the overtures made in the year 1903 to which he had referred had tended towards greater liberalism. Trinity College as a university had its face set in the right direction. True, it was stamped too clearly with the mark of Protestantism by having an episcopal divinity school within its walls, and from that stamp it should be freed. But educationally it was a free institution, and its government was largely academical, though that government might be made more academical still. At any rate, it was not in any sense the appanage of any episcopal body. It might be made a great national University, not only communicating its education to but shedding its prestige, which could not be denied, on men of all faiths, and binding them together in citizen brotherhood. He thought it was an infinite pity, as was pointed out by the Lord Chief Baron, that the feeling between Protestants and Catholics was not as cordial now as it was fifty years ago. That result he attributed in part to the Episcopal condemnation of that mixed education which would have brought Catholic and Protestant to mingle together. They were told that the objection to Trinity College was political and religious. Nonconformists might also say that their objection to Church of England institutions was both political and religious, but by going to Oxford and Cambridge in large numbers, ready to lose men by the way, they softened the bitterness, and they smoothed down the political and religious differences. If they wanted such difference, smoothed down in Ireland then they ought not to set up an opposition university or college. The Episcopacy of Ireland had clung to their plan because Government after Government had given them hope, sometimes more, sometimes less, that if they persevered they would in the end get their way. Let their Governments give up shilly-shallying on the subject. Let the Irish people look first to the interests of their children, and let them begin to be a force behind the episcopal throne. Let the Irish Bishops follow the example of Pius IX. in England and America and withdraw their prohibition of mixed education. That prohibition was not founded on evidence, but on an exaggeration of danger. It was not based on fact, but on fear or else on policy. To policy—a policy not carried out even by Roman Catholic States—the Episcopacy had sacrificed for more than fifty years the education and prospects of Ireland's sons. Let them turn over a new leaf, nay, let them go back to the old leaf and sacrifice their policy to their people, and then the future of higher education in Ireland would lie with Catholic and Protestant, one with another, not separated in youth, united in manhood, one in heart and soul for the best interest of their country.

SIR PHILIP MAGNUS (London University) said that for many years he had taken a deep interest in Irish education and particularly in university education. For that reason he thought he might be permitted to say a few words upon the important question under discussion. He very much regretted that a question of an educational character which was difficult enough in itself should be made still more difficult by the intrusion into it of political and religious considerations. He was sorry to find that the hon. Member for East Tyrone devoted so large a portion of his interesting speech to questions of a political character. The example was set by Mr. Bryce himself in his celebrated speech in January last when he stated that, "besides the several educational considerations, they were obliged to consider the political aspect" in endeavouring to solve this difficult problem. What were the actual facts to be faced in Ireland at the present time? It was not easy to exclude altogether the religious question from the matter which was now under consideration, but it was desirable to discuss it from an academic standpoint without any political bias. The way in which this discussion had been carried on had shown conclusively that there was a strong desire on both sides—he thought he might say in all quarters of the House—that the question should be settled speedily, and in conformity as far as possible with the wishes of the Irish people. There was also a general opinion that, whatever the faults of Trinity College might be, it was not desirable that any settlement of the question of providing university education for Catholics should interfere with or destroy the present condition of that college. It should be remembered that Trinity College represented the views of a large minority of the Irish people, and for that reason it was desirable that it should continue to carry on its ancient traditions and fulfil the purposes for which it was originally established. Notwithstanding the violent attack made by the mover of the Amendment on Trinity College, he felt certain that the Irish people did not desire to interfere with the excellent work which it had been carrying on for over 300 years. The question had been asked: What should be the character of the university for Ireland? A distinction had been rightly drawn between a Catholic university and a university for Catholics. That distinction was of importance. To arrive at a satisfactory solution of the problem it was necessary to put themselves in the position of the Roman Catholics of Ireland who formed the great majority of the people of that country, and to ask themselves what it was that would satisfy them. There was, unfortunately, bigotry and intolerance among freethinkers as well as among believers, among Nonconformists as well as among Churchmen. He did not believe that if a University were given to Catholics of the kind which they themselves desired, there would be in the ordinary sense of the word any tests for professors or for students. He believed that they would be ready to admit within their walls students of all denominations, and whilst they would rightly take care that the professors did not teach doctrines which they considered subversive of the highest considerations of their faith and religion, they would give the utmost possible freedom to their teachers in regard to other subjects. While holding the same views as the previous speaker about the necessity of freedom in science teaching, he recognised that there were those who regarded all science as relative, subjective, and possibly transitory. The hon. Member had suggested that a solution of the difficulty might be found in enlarging the sphere of Trinity College so that it might serve as a University for Catholics equally with Protestants, but they could not escape from the fact that the Commissioners appointed to consider this subject were unanimously of opinion, without any reservations, that such a solution was quite out of the question, and that it was impossible to recommend any such changes in the constitution of the college as would render it acceptable to Roman Catholics. It was not for them to say whether Roman Catholics were right or wrong. They had to recognise the fact that in Roman Catholic education, from the primary school to the University, there must be what was understood as the "religious atmosphere." It should be remembered also that in this House they were endeavouring to legislate for a portion of the United Kingdom where Roman Catholics were in a great majority. Therefore, it was essential that, they should consider the views of Roman Catholics. He believed that on both sides of the House there was a genuine desire in this matter to meet in the best possible way the views of the great majority of the people of Ireland. How was that to be done? A scheme was suggested by Mr. Bryce on the eve of his departure for the United States. He regretted that Mr. Bryce had put forward his scheme, and he hoped that the Chief Secretary would not be induced to commit himself prematurely to any one of the numerous schemes that had been brought forward, though there should be no great difficulty in arriving at a satisfactory solution. But Mr. Bryce's scheme would have done great injury to Trinity College, and it was not in accordance with the most modern views of University education. The union of colleges in a federal University had never been a permanent success. The colleges when sufficiently advanced had always developed into Universities. And for that reason a large number of persons were strongly opposed to Mr. Bryce's solution of the difficulty. The hon. Member who moved the Resolution quoted Dr. Windle as being favourably disposed to Mr. Bryce's scheme. What Dr. Windle said was that—

> "In Ireland a common University would bring together a group of colleges differing in age, in wealth, in religion, and in ideals."

And he went on to ask—

> "What would be the result?"

And he said—

> "In my opinion such a scheme would convert the national University into a cockpit—a cockpit, too, into which all the 'birds' would go spoiling for a fight."

Of all the schemes which he had seen, the one which he believed would bring most satisfaction to the Roman Catholics and at the same time prove to be the best in the interests of education was that there should be a separate University for Roman Catholics. He saw no objection to such a University being established in Dublin. It had been said that it would be unusual to have two Universities in Dublin; but there were a great many things in Ireland which were unusual. He urged, therefore, that something should be done as speedily as possible to give Ireland the higher education that was absolutely essential, and that an attempt should be made to find a solution of the difficult problem and to carry out the wishes of the Roman Catholics of Ireland.

*MR. C. B. HARMSWORTH (Worcestershire, Droitwich) said that as one of the few hon. Members on that side of the House who was a graduate of Trinity College he could not allow the opportunity to pass without saying something in defence of the institution to which he owed a great deal. He admitted freely that the Roman Catholics of Ireland had a great grievance, and that this grievance stood in urgent need of a remedy. On the other hand, he did not think that it could be fairly alleged that Trinity College had failed in its duty to endeavour to find some remedy for the admitted grievance. It could not be said that Trinity College grudged, or that it had ever grudged in the past 100 years, the aid of her prestige and her privileges to the Roman Catholics of Ireland. Every post of emolument and learning had been open since 1873 to Roman Catholic students as to the students of other faiths. She continued cordially to invite Roman Catholics to enter the college, and it had always been a mystery to him why that invitation had not been as cordially accepted. It had always seemed to him that if Roman Catholics were to frequent the College in sufficiently large numbers they might in a very short time obtain a large share of control, and they might even create their own atmosphere therein. Speaking as a Protestant, he did not feel that he was in the slightest degree entitled to dogmatise as to what Roman Catholics wanted. All he could say was that he was prepared to admit they had a grievance, that they knew their own business best, and that it was the business of Parliament to remedy the grievance as speedily as possible in a liberal spirit. It was said that Trinity College had been neglectful of Gaelic studies and of archæological inquiries. No doubt the charge went home, but in mitigation it should not be forgotten that Gaelic studies had been almost universally neglected in Ireland until a short time ago. The University of Dublin had not always been anti-national. There was at least one period—a brief period he admitted—when the highest aspirations of the Irish people were faithfully reflected within its walls—when Grattan's Parliament was over against Trinity College. It was not the habit of Universities to be in advance of their time. The best solution of the problem at any rate would be that the episcopal ban should be removed and that Roman Catholics should be allowed to enter Trinity College; but that being impossible, the second best solution, in his opinion, would be the establishment of a distinct Catholic college under the Royal University of Ireland. The Bryce scheme was, in his opinion, the worst solution, because it involved tying up together a number of colleges mutually hostile in a sort of cat and dog life, the only vital connection between them being a mixed board in which, not educational, but denominational, views would predominate. He had heard with great regret the almost universal disparagement of the Royal University of Ireland, even by members of it. [AN HON. MEMBER: There was reason for it.] The Queen's Colleges, having regard to their defective constitution, had as well as the Royal University of Ireland done extremely good work. The vital defect of the Royal University was that it had not a residential college. His right hon. friend had been given a great deal of advice, but might he ask him very respectfully to pause not once or twice, but fifty times, before he imperilled the future of what had been described as the only successful English institution in Ireland? They had in Trinity College a most successful foundation, and he thought it would be extremely unwise to imperil its career by linking it up with colleges some of which had been successful and some not. There was one suggestion of Mr. Bryce—that the graduates of the Royal University should be drafted into the Dublin University—which surprised him. Whatever Parliament might do, it could not confer a degree, and it would be little short of an outrage to take the graduates of any University and draft them into Dublin and give them all the privileges which attached to a Master's degree of that University. There was another objection to be made to Mr. Bryce's scheme which equally applied to the scheme of the Robertson Commission. He thought the Nonconformists of England and Scotland who took an unusual interest in this matter, would object just as strongly to Mr. Bryce's so-called undenominational college, as they would to the establishment of a distinctly Roman Catholic college in Dublin, because it was the essence of Mr. Bryce's college that it should be Roman Catholic in atmosphere and spirit and in fact.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) said the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down was not only a graduate of Trinity College, but a very distinguished one. He took exception to his statement, however, that it was a very successful institution. It was not a successful institution. In Ireland at present there was no University whatever that gave to a young man of necessity a University training. A man might come to Trinity College and become a graduate without having once been in a lecture-room or being placed in a true University environment. Out of the 800 or 900 students in Trinity College, at least 400 were non-residents and only came up and passed examinations. Only 450 men attended lectures and had a real University environment, yet what an expenditure was incurred for the purpose! Sixty or seventy thousand a year was spent on giving 400 or 450 resident students a University education. A University which could only achieve such a result was not a success. What he wanted as a Protestant was to give his Catholic fellow-countrymen a fair chance of equipment in life which they had not under the present university system. His hon. and distinguished friend the Member for Cambridge University said he had a grudge against Trinity College. He had no such thing. His father was a graduate of Trinity College, and his grandfather was also a graduate, but he said, as an Irish Protestant, that the existence of Trinity College, every acre of whose land had been confiscated from the Catholic Church, was a standing outrage so long as University education given in a way acceptable to them was denied to the Catholics of Ireland. He attended on St. Julian's Day—St. Julian was a saint not known in England—on the 24th of September, 1904, the laying of a foundation stone in Letterkenny by the Bishop of Raphoe, who made a speech by which he was much struck. The Bishop said it was a very monstrous thing that no less a sum than £9,000 per annum had been for three centuries taken from the impoverished province of Donegal as rent from land and had gone to Trinity Collegee. No good would be obtained and no proper work done unless once for all the war was taken into the enemy's country and Trinity College itself was attacked. There were two gentlemen who in that debate had been conspicuous by their absence. One was the late Prime Minister who in a speech at Partick said he did not know how to defend the Union in regard to the question of education. Where was the right hon. Gentleman now? He was as discreetly absent as he was when the question of tariff reform came up. Where again was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover, who was the great exponent of the late Government's policy in regard to education in Ireland? Where was the right hon. Gentleman who said he would stake his head on the settlement of the Irish university question? The right hon. Gentleman had a chance of settling this question, but he betrayed the Irish people by not doing so. Speaking strictly as a Protestant, he said that Trinity College was meant to be an anti-national foundation. That was shown by Professor Mahaffy's History of Trinity College. Anyone who looked at that book would see there very fine instructions as to how the Roman Catholics could be Protestantised and how they could catch a young O'Connell or two. The young O'Connell they did catch did not follow out what was so preached because he was the strongest exponent of the national feeling of his day. Trinity College was unsatisfactory even to Protestants, and he said that with some knowledge of the subject. Every Protestant parent in Ireland who had the choice would rather send his boy to Oxford or Cambridge than to Trinity College. The reason was that the revenues of Trinity College were scandalously misappropriated, one pound in every three being divided among eight old men who did nothing but take the money and give laws to the institution. Trinity College might better be described as an old men's asylum than as a seat of learning. Every man connected with

Trinity College who had the means had sent his son to an English university, because he knew that the institution was mismanaged, a job and a failure. Nearly every man connected with the history of Ireland had had some dispute with Trinity College. When Grattan, in 1798, was dismissed from the council his portrait was taken down and put in the kitchen. When John Ingram got his position O'Connell said the bird which sang so sweetly was caged in Trinity College and would sing no more, and he was right. But he would give all praise to one man who was connected with that institution, the man who was the author of the words "Home Rule." He was a fellow of Trinity College, called Joseph Younger. He was too great a man to be utterly tabooed, but he was killed and slaughtered there. He regretted that the late Solicitor-General had gone, but in his absence he would speak well of him. During the whole of the speech of the senior Member for Trinity College he was overflowing with love towards the Catholics—they should have everything they desired provided the principles of Trinity College were not interfered with. The right hon. Gentleman did not, however, tell them that Dublin University returned two Members to Parliament, and the real reason for the opposition to the proposal that a new college should be added was that the constituency might be swamped. From the Union to the present time not a single Fellow of Trinity College had been a Member for the University. Statesman after statesman on both sides had smothered them with promises of Catholic universities, yet year after year and generation after generation had gone by and nothing had been done. Were the English Government afraid to face an intellectually equipped people? What was the computation of a university generation? An ordinary generation was computed at thirty years, a college generation at three years, and since the first promise had been made thirty generations had passed away, and nothing had been done for the Catholic people. It might not be generally known that as far back as 1798 a scheme was provided for a Catholic University. It would have been brought to fruition in 1803 if the Union had not been brought about, and during all this time the people had been deprived of proper mental training. It was an outrage, but the outrage was aggravated when it was the fact that the old Protestant College had not a single acre of land that was not filched from the Catholic Church. Ireland was a centre of learning and history, and long before Oxford and Cambridge were founded 1,300 students came to the old Irish University. It might be that Trinity College could be saved by a Bill being brought in which the people might be pleased to accept, but he hoped no compromise would be made by the Irish people. But for God's sake let not men be destroyed as they had been—men who had great intellects and only wanted the chance of an education. Was the Irish University question shelved now, and if so, why? Why should not the time given to the MacDonnell-Dunraven Council Bill have been given to the question of University education? Why was Ireland to be defrauded of her educational rights? He appealed to the Chief Secretary to settle the question.

*Mr. BARRIE (Londonderry, N.) said there had been frequent references to the remarkable farewell speech which Mr. Bryce had delivered, and which he had always considered was meant to be an opportunity for a little kite-flying on behalf of the Government. The speech had led to rather various forms of interest among those who approached the subject from different standpoints. He intervened in the debate with a certain amount of regret, because he found that in regard to the General Assembly of the Church to which he belonged there seemed to be in certain quarters, which he did not desire to minimise, a view that it favoured the proposal put forward by Mr. Bryce. He thought he would have preferred that the resolutions adopted at the last meeting of the General Assembly had been deferred until they had before them the actual text of the Bill which the Government had promised. This above all other problems was one in which the ultimate view would be very largely decided by the details of the measure by which the discussion would be followed. His colleague the hon. Member for South Londonderry had made a contribution to the debate with which he was in full accord. He thought it only right that the House should be reminded that the resolutions to which he was referring were supported by less than one-third of the members of the Assembly, and that a counter-resolution with which he was also in full accord, received the support of only some seventy or eighty votes fewer than those given for the resolution which was carried. He desired to emphasise the fact that almost one-half of the members of the Assembly took the wisest course open to them in the circumstances. They evidently believed that the time was not opportune for passing judgment on a speech which was meant as a preliminary to important legislation later on. He did not think any of the interesting contributions to the debate to which they had listened were more remarkable than the caustic speech by the hon. Member for North Louth. He believed the case the hon. and learned Member made was unanswerable, because they knew that it had been alleged by speaker after speaker that afternoon that there was a general consensus of opinion in Ireland in favour of the scheme outlined by Mr. Bryce. That was more than even the present Chief Secretary would claim for the late and not greatly-lamented measure which had not yet been decently buried, but which was thoroughly and effectively dead. He suggested that the House had a right to ask from the Chief Secretary a clear and concise statement why that measure, in spite of the promise in the King's Speech, had not been brought before the House, while the other Bill—he referred to the Home Rule Bill—on which there was a marked division of opinion was brought forward and met with the unkind reception which he hoped all similar measures would meet with. They had heard another remarkable speech from the hon. Member sitting on the benches opposite, and he could not help thinking, where the hon. Member talked of the apathy in Ireland in regard to higher education, that it was the Roman Catholics who boycotted Trinity College and not Trinity College who boycotted them. Whatever the merits or demerits of that institution, it had always of recent years opened its doors wide to all students who desired to take advantage of the great educational facilities it offered. A number of Presbyterians had taken advantage of those opportunities, and had been justified in doing so by capturing many of the rewards it offered. The same opportunities were open to Roman Catholics. A few years ago there was in Dublin a marked movement among young Roman Catholics, in spite of the opinion of the hierarchy, to enter Trinity College and take their part in the fight for academic honours, but the hierarchy refused to allow them to join. Yet they had it said there that night that upon those who refused to grant the demands of the Roman Catholic Church lay the responsibility for the poverty of education which the youth of the Roman Catholic Church were at present able to receive in Ireland. That was the charge made against them, and which they had to answer. He ventured to say that if there was a vestige of intolerance in regard to education in Ireland, it was upon the part of the hierarchy of the Romish Church in that country. There were ample opportunities in Ireland for the youth of the land to receive an education not seriously inferior to any that could be obtained at either Oxford or Cambridge. They had been told that the Roman Catholic hierarchy did not venture to challenge Roman Catholics who attended those seats of learning. Why, then, should they be challenged when they were desirous of attending a college in Dublin, open to all the youth of the land? He had heard no answer to that argument. The only argument they had heard was a continued attack upon Trinity College, Dublin. He was glad that the attack had not been extended to other colleges in Ireland, which were all taking in their own way an honourable part in educating their students. They had been told that the scheme outlined by Mr. Bryce was not denominational. Let them hear public opinion on that matter. Very shortly after Mr. Bryce made his speech the *Westminster Gazette* said—

> "The Government scheme is absolutely undenominational. . . . It is very important to bear in mind that the Roman Catholic Bishops in their letter to the recent Royal Commission accepted a second College in the University of Dublin free from any sort of test as satisfactory."

That was one point of view. Then they had an important utterance by a well-known Roman Catholic, Mr. George

Mansfield, J.P. and D.L., who wrote as follows to the public Press—

> "The fact is the whole fuss about the necessity of complete undenominationalism in the new University is simply made to satisfy English Nonconformists and North of Ireland Protestants. It is unreal. For the success of the whole scheme all know that practically the new college must be Catholic in atmosphere and teaching."

He suggested to the House that this showed the diversity of opinion which prevailed on this matter. Then they had the evidence of Bishop O'Dwyer given before the Robertson Commission, and this was what he said—

> "Over and against that ideal of education is our Catholic ideal. Our ideal of education is that religion and secular knowledge cannot be separated, and that at the time between, say, eighteen years of age and twenty-five years of age, it is necessary for him [*i.e.*, for a student] to be brought up in surroundings that will be congenial to his faith and favourable to the growth of it. All the sciences that are taught in a university come in contact with so many aspects of religion and so many views of religious life, that it is impossible to teach secularism purely without in one way or another touching on the religious issue."

And then, cross-examined by the Chairman of the Commission, he was asked if he had any objection to laymen forming part of the governing body of the College, and the following were the questions answered—

> "Chairman.—It has been remarked that it does not matter whether the lay element is numerically predominant or not; it all depends on whether you have got the right laymen.
>
> "Bishop O'Dwyer.—That of course would have a very great deal to say to it.
>
> "Chairman.—I suppose by the right men you mean people who would, in Dr. Healy's words, generally defer at once to the ascertained views of the bishops on questions of this kind?
>
> "Bishop O'Dwyer.—On any question of faith and morals, I take it for granted among Catholic people that they would defer to the bishops."

He read these extracts as showing where they would be led if the scheme outlined by Mr. Bryce were accepted. Of course, he desired to bear in mind that the present Chief Secretary dissociated himself from the speech made by Mr. Bryce, and was by no means committed to the outlines therein contained. But they had not on the other hand heard from the present Chief Secretary what his particular scheme was, and, therefore, Mr. Bryce's scheme remained the only Government plan at present before the country. Those extracts showed the objections the vast majority of the Protestants of the North of Ireland entertained towards this scheme. They had always sent a certain number of their youths to Trinity College, and so long as it remained upon its present status they would continue to do so. What he wished to remind the Committee of was that, whilst a strong claim had been made out for the sons of Roman Catholics, the claims of Protestants should not be minimised. The existing educational institutions in Ireland had been carried on in the past under enlightened auspices, and no difficulty, even in the case of Queen's College, Belfast, had ever arisen precluding the sons of Roman Catholics from taking advantage of that institution. He could recall more than one case where the sons of Roman Catholics had come to the Belfast Queen's College and had done themselves credit by taking off some of the highest honours which that college could give. He had never heard it suggested that, in the atmosphere of the Queen's Colleges either in the north or in the south of Ireland, there had been any religious difficulty, and he hoped that when the Government did finally fulfil its promise they would bear in mind that although the Protestants were in a minority, minorities had some right to consideration, and whatever arrangements they made they would see that opportunities for Protestants were not lessened. He trusted that in some way or other a solution of this matter would be reached that would give the youth of Ireland fuller and even better opportunities for higher education than they had yet enjoyed.

MR. BIRRELL said he desired at the outset of his remarks to say a word or two about the Queen's Colleges. He had not had an opportunity since his accession to his present office to make himself personally acquainted with any of these three colleges, except the college of Cork; but he must not be understood as in any way agreeing with anything that had been said that seemed to imply that Queen's College, Cork, was otherwise than a most satisfactory and energetic institution. He was not easily moved by academic surroundings, nor was he one of those sentimental persons who sought every opportunity of expressing their own enormous obligations to University education. He had noticed that for the most part the people who were the most sentimental about their college days were those who were idlest whilst they were there. Cork College, however, appeared to him to be a most satisfactory and thoroughly alive institution. It had 261 students, the largest number in any year since 1884. These students were eager and keen, poor in outward circumstances, leading the academic life in more of the mediæval sense, or the Scottish sense, than we were accustomed to in Oxford or in Cambridge at the present time, living in poor lodgings in Cork, but studying, particularly scientific subjects, with the utmost zeal and enthusiasm, and as their achievements in all parts of the world showed, both in chemistry and in engineering, with very marked success. If ever there was a place where the academic life was honestly and thoroughly led, it was at present, under the able, sympathetic headship of Dr. Windle, in the poor, but, he hoped, some day prosperous college, or prosperous University of Cork. He quoted from page 418 of the Appendix to the final Report of the Royal Commission some observations of Dr. Coghlan of Maynooth, which ought to receive the fullest consideration of the Roman Catholic Church and of all good Catholics in Ireland. It was an article reprinted from the pages of a magazine, in which he asked—

> "And if Cork and Galway Colleges were reconstituted to-morrow on Catholic lines, and if we got a college for Catholics in Dublin, have we Catholics ready to fill the professorships in these colleges and in the seminaries? Shall we be ready when—if ever—the education difficulty is finally solved? Through the example of their distinguished President and Catholic professors, and through the zeal of their spiritual director, the Catholic students of the Queen's College, Cork, are recognised to be as safe to-day in the matter of faith and morals as the extern students of any college in Ireland; and yet priests are forbidden *sub gravi* to 'advise' any student to go there, and the college is supposed to remain a proximate occasion of mortal sin. No doubt there is no guarantee of the continuance of this happy state of things, and consequently no change should be made in the official relation of the Church to the college; but while the Church's official relation remains the same, would it not be better somewhat in practice rather to send as many students as possible to such a college, particularly to study Arts, with a view to qualify them for professorships and other public offices in the country?"

That was a view which any Catholic could assent to without running any danger to his faith or morals; and he hoped that nothing might be done to impair the efficiency of these places. He hoped, on the contrary, that they might receive from the Treasury much more generous support than they had hitherto received, and that they had a considerable career of usefulness before them. Upon the actual question now before them he was glad to notice that upon the whole there had been very few speeches which had shown any indication of going back on what he had always understood to be the general consent of both Parties in the House, and to be supported by every Commission that had sat on this question. It would indeed, he thought, be a grievous thing were the House in any way to express the faintest measure of indisposition to recognise what had always been found to be the case, that the present state of University education in Ireland was lamentably deficient, that its lack was a grievous injury to the country, and inflicted serious loss upon the people themselves, and also upon the public service. That had been for many years past admitted, and it had also been admitted that Trinity College, as it was at present, could not possibly, in any circumstances, meet this necessary want. Some persons had spoken as if the dislike to Trinity College was confined to Catholics. He was bound to say that during the time he had had some personal opportunity of making himself acquainted with the subject he had found the dislike of the Presbyterians for Trinity College was expressed with far greater bitterness, much more vehemence, and more personal feeling than any he had heard from the mouths of Roman Catholics. Therefore, it must be said that Trinity College had completely failed to meet the wants of Roman Catholics and Presbyterians. He did not think that after the speeches they had heard in the House and after the letters written by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, who, he doubted not, was more profitably occupied somewhere else—— [Laughter.] He was speaking quite seriously. He had no doubt the right hon. Gentleman was more profitably employed elsewhere. It would have been a pleasure to him, as it always was, to address his observations to the House within the hearing of the right hon. Gentleman. They had had from the right hon. Gentleman and from a great number of persons on his side of the House, including the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin, a full recognition that it was not to be wondered at that the Roman Catholics of Ireland were not willing to send their sons to Trinity College as it was at present constituted, or as there was any chance of its being constituted. That opened up a question he was ill-qualified to discuss, and for the discussion of which he did not think that House was the proper place; that was to say, the question of the natural and proper anxiety parents might feel when selecting a place for the college education of their sons. Some people, no doubt, might think lightly of the matter. Some people might think that provided only a boy went to a college where there was a healthy, manly life, where he was taught to tell the truth and take his own part and obey his tutors, within reason, and was brought up according to the religion of the place and came out a straightforward man—well, they might feel "in my Father's house are many mansions," and it might well be that he would not come to any harm hereafter because of the atmosphere of the place. But they could not expect deeply religious people, whether Catholics or Presbyterians, to regard with such composure the character of the place to which they sent their sons. If a man was of opinion that the character of religious faith was of the utmost importance, they could not expect him to be otherwise than anxious as to the character of the place he was sending his son to. Suppose it were not religion. Suppose it were a question of fiscal reform, and suppose there were in Ireland an active, eager, and zealous tariff reformer, and he was anxious to send his son to a place where political economy and other subjects were properly taught—would he send his son to an institution built up on the traditions of free trade, where all the professors were free-traders, where the one place of adornment in the school—he must not call it a chapel—the place where the lectures on political economy were delivered, was the centre of free-trade principles, and round the base of the dome of which some such words as these were inscribed: "No tax shall be levied save for purposes of revenue alone?" He wondered whether such a father would be easily satisfied with the assurances of the professors that there were no tests whatever in that place, that everybody was at liberty to hold any kind of opinion in political economy he liked. He would say: "That won't do for me. The whole tone and spirit of the place are based on free trade, all the professors are free-traders, and I find even the professor of Arabic is a free-trader. The whole tone of the place for 300 years past has been that of free trade." I think that father would take away his children—Joseph Chamberlain and Henry Chaplin—from that place and would seek some other place where he could send them and where their economic faith would not be interfered with. He said that simply because he thought it was desirable to change, as it were, the venue, and to look at this matter not purely from a religious point of view, but from any point of view which seriously engaged the thoughts and attentions of mankind. He said, therefore, he entirely agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, who in a remarkable letter which he wrote on January 23rd, 1899, said—

> "At this moment the vast majority of students in that great university are Protestants; Protestant services are exclusively performed in its chapel; at this moment, as it happens, the whole of its teaching staff is Protestant, and the eminent theologian who is at its head, distinguished in many departments of learning, is not least distinguished as a brilliant Protestant champion in the controversy between Protestantism and Rome. Now, imagine a university of which this was an accurate description, with the single exception that wherever the word 'Protestant' occurred the words 'Roman Catholic' were put in its place. Would you willingly send there any Protestant youth for whose education you were responsible? For myself I answer the question unhesitatingly in the negative. Perhaps I am bigoted, but if so I am assured that there are many Protestant parents to be found not less bigoted in Ireland. To them, at least, I can confidently appeal not to condemn

others for doing what they, under like circumstances, would do themselves."

The hon. Member for one of the divisions of Worcestershire, who had spoken as a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin, thought that if only Roman Catholics would be courageous in this matter and persisted in sending their children to Trinity College for the next thirty or forty years, why, in time they might effect a cure—they might import a Catholic atmosphere even into Trinity College, and the difficulty might be removed. That was a very heroic and noble policy. But he could quite understand a man who had two or three children thinking that their religious faith during the next thirty or forty years was a matter of greater importance than the atmosphere of Trinity College thirty or forty years hence. Whether their sons would really run any great risk in attending Trinity College was a question which he declined altogether to answer. He said that they were responsible in that House, particularly those members who refused to concede to Ireland what he was perfectly willing at any moment to concede—namely, her own Home Rule Parliament, which would have control of this question. Hon. Members who refused to give Ireland that right ought to be the first to concede to the Roman Catholics of Ireland that which they demanded, and this Unionism was, after all, a contemptible thing unless they were prepared to do justice to the country which they refused to allow to govern itself. The hon. and learned Gentleman who moved the reduction of the Vote raised this point quite clearly, that the kind of university which was really required in order to meet the needs of the Irish people was not met, even apart from the religious controversy, by the same old-fashioned arrangements, classical and mathematical, of Trinity College. He confessed that he thought Ireland was peculiarly a country which required for the education of its younger men a modern spirit in University education. The right hon. Gentleman the member for the University of Dublin had spoken feelingly of the necessity of educating the surveyors of Ireland—he could only think of the surveyors, but there were other persons such as clerks to boards of guardians, and holders of other appointments, which in Ireland, as, indeed, in England or anywhere else, would be all the better filled by people the better educated they were. The right hon. and learned Member said that University education was particularly desirable in Ireland because those people stood in need of a better education than they had got. Well, we all stood in need of a better education than we got, and he did not think any particular distinction need be drawn between one community and another. But, obviously, if those persons were to receive the benefit of a University education, that University education must be made to proceed upon simple and democratic lines. And, therefore, quite apart from the religious difficulty and the traditions of Trinity College, which were so strong and powerful, he thought that the University education required in Ireland should be far more elastic, and have far more recognition of the needs of the people, both technical and national. And, therefore, he thought that in those respects there was much to be said for the views put forward by the right hon. and learned Gentleman. He must refer to the very short and blunt speech of the hon. Member for Louth. His speeches always had a very clear motive, and, therefore, they could clearly understand why they were made. The hon. and learned Gentleman was kind enough to intimate his opinion that he had been betrayed over the Irish Council Bill. Well, he repudiated that statement altogether. He was certainly disappointed, and he was surprised, but betrayed he most distinctly was not. He was glad to hear that, if in this matter of University education he wanted a real, true, and trustful friend in whom he could place confidence, he had only to apply to the hon. and learned Member The Prime Minister suggested the other day, when he sent him over to Ireland to look into this matter, that he was a man of a sanguine disposition. He did not know whether he was or not, but he was a man of a trustful and hopeful disposition; and he could assure the hon. and learned Gentleman that, if he would give him assistance at any time in settling this education question, he would be very grateful to him for that aid.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I only ask why you did not keep your word.

Mr. BIRRELL said it could not be news to the hon. and learned Gentleman, who was one of the most skilled Parliamentarians in the House, that, regrettable as it might be, Ministers often announced in the King's Speech promises to introduce measures which the fulness of time did not enable them to fulfil. He pleaded guilty in that matter. He was responsible for suggesting that there should be included in the King's Speech both the Irish Council Bill and a University Bill. He was hopeful at that time that it might be possible to introduce those measures and to see them through. He perceived now that it was not, and he could only express his own regret that it was so. As for a breach of faith, he repudiated it entirely. He could say, for his own part, that he should be unable to consent to hold the office he did if the Government were shelving this question, if they were not determined to do all they could to accomplish its solution. But the hon. and learned Gentleman and everybody knew full well that it was one of the most difficult questions that could possibly engage their attention. It was not a question of his good will. It was not even a question of the good will of the hon. and learned Gentleman or of the Irish people. It was a question of that House. It was a question of hon. Gentlemen opposite, of some hon. Gentlemen who sat behind him, and of the House of Lords at the other end of the lobby. All these things had to be taken into consideration; and a person would have to be sanguine to the point of folly who did not recognise that it would be exceedingly difficult, unless it were made the one Bill of the session, to fight through that House and the other House any higher education question in Ireland which did not receive a very full measure of support. Unanimity he put entirely on one side. He did not expect that he or any one could make any proposal which would be received with anything like practical unanimity, but there were some forces and some kinds of opposition which had to be taken into consideration.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Did you consider these things before the King's Speech?

Mr. BIRRELL: Yes, certainly; and if the hon. and learned Gentleman simply wished to bring against him the accusation of inexperience and of over-hopefulness he must submit, as many far greater men than he had had to submit, to being exposed to that censure from him. But he had learned by experience, and he did not think he was likely to fall into that error again. Mr. Bryce's scheme had been much criticised. He would have said that Mr. Bryce, of all men in the world, was the man best qualified by his own past life and experience to deal with this University question. If ever there was a man who was, in every sense of the word, a University man it was his right hon. friend. He was the quintessence of knowledge on the subject. He had served on more educational committees than even the present Member for the University of Cambridge. He had himself led a college life. He was a man of European reputation and of enormous learning, and he threw himself into this question with greater *prima facie* qualifications for it than anybody else whom he had ever known. And he succeeded in a very remarkable degree in obtaining greater support both from the Roman Catholic community and from the Presbyterian community than he thought had ever been received before.

He could not go behind the public expressions of those conclusions. He did not say that that was the only scheme they were prepared to support.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.), amidst loud cries of "Order," was understood to ask whether the hon. Gentleman accepted Mr. Bryce's conclusions.

MR. BIRRELL hoped the hon. Member would allow him to proceed. It was not for him to go behind the public expressions of the various persons with whom Mr. Bryce had communications. He was not prepared to say that they were of opinion that his scheme was the best. All he knew was that they acquiesced in his scheme and were led to give it a very full measure of support—both the Roman Catholics and representatives of the Presbyterians of the north, far better qualified to speak on behalf of that body than the hon. Member who interrupted him. He said therefore, that Mr. Bryce's scheme was one which he was well entitled to put forward. Whether he was altogether wise in entering into the detail that he did was another matter altogether. The hon. Member for the University of Cambridge had complained rather that Mr. Bryce made his speech so soon after the Report of the Commissioners and without giving anybody the opportunity of reading the evidence. But Mr. Bryce made that quite plain before he left. Mr. Bryce's own view had always been in favour of the scheme which he foreshadowed. He referred it to the Royal Commission, and if they had reported against it, he would have felt bound to drop it; but inasmuch as the Commission, by a majority reported in its favour Mr. Bryce felt at liberty to take the scheme up and recommend its adoption as the best solution of the problem. Mr. Bryce's scheme had been before the country for some time, and it had received the support, not only of the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church, but also of a very large number of distinguished members of the laity, upwards of 2,000 of whom had signed a document in general support of the scheme. In the same way the Presbyterians had, at their General Assembly, expressed a general support of the scheme. That was a considerable achievement on the part of Mr. Bryce, and his scheme could not be regarded as an impossible solution of the question. But he admitted that it had excited a very great degree of opposition on the part of Trinity College. He should not have been disposed to attach too much importance to that if he had not felt, when he came to look into the matter, and to discuss it with the heads of the colleges, a doubt as to how far they had fully grasped the significance of the whole scheme. They were all possessed with the view that, though they were to be members of the same University, they were all to have the fullest autonomy in college management; and when he cross-examined them to find how much autonomy they were prepared to sacrifice in order that there might really be a University properly so-called, controlling degrees and exercising a potent voice in the examinations, he found such great differences of opinion among them as led him to believe that at closer quarters this asset would be found to be a delusive asset. That filled him with some amount of scepticism as to how far a true solution of the question was to be found on these lines. Therefore, he put himself into communication with persons who had assented to Mr. Bryce's scheme and expressed their willingness to adopt it, in order to see whether or not any other possible solution would receive the same measure of support from them. He was not now at liberty to state what the result of those communications had been.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: What was the date? Was it after the King's Speech?

Mr. BIRRELL: Oh, certainly. He might say, however, that he had reason to believe that these persons would be willing to associate themselves with some other scheme; and, therefore, though he did not in any sense give up Mr. Bryce's scheme as a possible solution, he now believed that it would be possible to work with the same people; and that, desiring to obtain, and obtaining, the same consent as Mr. Bryce obtained, a modification of that scheme might be adopted which would very much reduce opposition; and, what was a matter of some importance, that some one or other of the measures with which his name was associated should find itself eventually on the Statute Book. But he did not regard those men as being his true friends who sought to urge him on, even by compliment, as to this, that, or the other thing. His heart was more set on the vital importance of obtaining a solution of this University question than on anything else. What chance would there be in the next session of securing a solution? The next session of the House did not occupy a very cheerful position to an eager legislator who wished to see himself immortalised on the Statute Book. Matters of great importance would be before the House, and there were certain forces and elements in his own Party which led him to ask what chance there was of the Government being able next session successfully to solve this question unless they had, at all events, done their very best to come to something like a friendly conclusion upon it. He did not think that there was anything to be ashamed of in that view. The question was not a popular one. It shattered the great Administration of Mr. Gladstone; it divided the Tory Party into two ranks, just as they were divided on the question of Catholic emancipation. It was, therefore, a vexed question, a difficult question, a question which a cautious man would, as far as possible, abstain from having anything to do with. But he connected himself with it; he associated himself with it, and he had no other desire than to pass the measure through the House. He hoped that during the autumn he would be able to approach it. There was no hardship in passing one's autumn in Ireland. He would just as lief spend it there as anywhere else, and he only hoped that it would be a longer autumn than the last. During that time he would certainly welcome all the help he could get from any one—he cared not who—in order to secure a solution of the question—a solution which would enable the vast majority of the people, being good and faithful Roman Catholics, to receive an education within the walls of a University where they could be sent by their fathers and mothers and by the priests of their religion, with at least confidence that they would be taught nothing destructive of their religious belief. These were his views, and he expressed his own regret that the question proved to be one of such great difficulty and complexity that it was impossible to pass it through Parliament this session. He hoped, however, that it might be possible to pass it through next session.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said he wished to take this, the first opportunity he had had, of expressing his dissent from that part of Mr. Bryce's scheme which left out Queen's College, Galway, from the final university settlement. He himself had been a student at that college, and he made this protest because he thought it was an essential element of the true and practical settlement of the university question in Ireland, that colleges should be scattered all over the country, as far as possible, and education brought to the doors of even the poorest of the poor. He strongly urged the Chief Secretary that he should not only leave Queen's College there, but leave it intact as a member of the university body. He had also been disappointed in some other respects. They knew that the right hon. Gentleman was a genuine friend of Ireland, and that if he failed in dealing with this question or any other this session it was due to the overwhelming difficulties in the way not only of Irish but of English reforms. But it did not make their disappointment less keen that the Government, having been relieved of the Irish Council Bill, had not proceeded this session with the University Bill, at all events to the length of introducing it, so that some advance might be made. The Catholics of Ireland were not divided but united in this matter. Mr. Bryce's scheme was supported by 2,000 Catholic laymen in Ireland before the hierarchy pronounced their opinion upon it. The Irish Catholic surely ought not to be reproached by a Nonconformist for not taking advantage of the splendid equipment of Trinity College. In Wales the Established Church had magnificent cathedrals, and the Welsh Nonconformist was invited to enter them and was offered social and political reward for doing so, but to his honour he insisted on going to his own little red-brick chapel. Surely the Irish Catholics ought not to be reproached for not taking advantage of Trinity College, and for having preferred conscience to convenience. Nonconformists should be the last to reproach them, seeing that the whole history of Nonconformists was one record of their preferring spiritual to temporal advantages. The Catholics did not go into Trinity College because they believed the faith of their children was likely to be sapped and undermined by the associations there. He honoured his people for withstanding the temptation. The right hon. Member for the City of London had struck a deeper and a truer, a more liberal and tolerant note. It was well that it should be so. The arguments of the hon. Member for the Cricklade division were familiar to his co-religionists. They were familiar in Russia, not in England. In Russia it was often pointed out that the Jews would often escape massacre if they would abandon their religion, but the Jews preferred the risk of massacre to the abandonment of their religion. He thought that it was not asking too much that the most ancient form of Christianity in the world should have the same tolerance extended towards it as was given to every man in that House and to every other religious community. The right hon. Gentleman had now before him the scheme of Mr. Bryce. It was only one of three schemes of University reform in Ireland which had been submitted within the last few years. This third scheme had been accompanied by the very remarkable declaration that it was not only the scheme of the Government, but was the only scheme that the Government was going to support. The scheme was submitted to the public opinion of Ireland, and the laity and the hierarchy approved it; many of the Presbyterians approved it; yet the Bill no sooner proved itself susceptible to public opinion in Ireland than immediately it joined the other phantoms of past schemes, and was buried almost before they had seen it. That was trifling with the question. For two generations this question had been the battledore and shuttlecock of English politics. Englishmen did not seek to impose English ideals on the Parsee, the Mahomedan, or the Jew, but only on the Catholics of Ireland. That was not his idea of true Liberalism; it was not true toleration, he did not think that it was even true religion. It was all vanity and vexation of spirit on either side. He knew that many men had mourned, as he mourned, the religious differences which existed, but these would only be aggravated by imposing on Irishmen a system of education of which they did not approve. He trusted that the right hon. Gentleman when he came to deal with the question in the next session of Parliament would not find any hostility on his own side, but that the mass of enlightened and genuine Liberalism would back him in giving to the people that education of which by genius and intellect they had less right than any other nation to be deprived.

MR. T. L. CORBETT said the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had made a deliberate attack on Ulster Members for speaking of the Catholic Church as the Roman Catholic Church—[Cries of "Romish"]—but in the last Parliament the Leader of the Nationalist Party, in writing to one of the Bishops, described the Catholic Church as the Roman Catholic Church. Therefore, there could be no insult whatever in using the words "Romish Church" in the debate. He wished to call attention to one extraordinary sentence in the speech of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, that he was prepared to grant any day a full measure of Home Rule to Ireland. He had the courage of his convictions, but had the right hon. Gentleman consulted his colleagues in the Cabinet? It was easy to sit on the front Bench and make such a statement, when the Foreign Minister, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and other Members of the Government, who were against Home Rule, were not in their places.

And, it being Eleven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

LEEDS (SOUTH PARADE CHAPEL) CHARITY BILL.

Not amended (by the Standing Committee), considered; to be read the third time upon Thursday next.

KINGSWOOD (WHITFIELD TABERNACLE, SCHOOL-ROOM, ETC.) CHARITY BILL.

Not amended (by the Standing Committee), considered; to be read the third time upon Thursday next.

LONGTON (CAROLINE STREET CHAPEL) CHARITY BILL.

Not amended (by the Standing Committee), considered; to be read the third time upon Thursday next.

BOARD OF EDUCATION SCHEME (HULME TRUST ESTATES EDUCATIONAL) CONFIRMATION BILL.

Not amended (by the Standing Committee), considered; read the third time, and passed.

Adjourned at five minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 5*th July*, 1907.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH.

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—Alton Military Hospital Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO NOT COMPLIED WITH.

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have not been complied with, viz. :—Broadstairs and St. Peter's Urban District Water Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

Hull and Barnsley Railway Bill. Lords Amendments considered, and agreed to.

Burnham (Somerset) Pier Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

Kendal Corporation Bill [Lords]. As amended, to be considered upon Monday next.

King Edward's Hospital Fund for London Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

Dundee Corporation Order Confirmation Bill [Lords]. Read a second time; and ordered to be considered upon Tuesday next.

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London, No. 2) Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed.

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Kirriemuir, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC (LOCAL OPTION) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition of the General Assembly of the United Free Church of Scotland, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SMALL LANDHOLDERS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour; From Alva; Canisbay; Causewayhead; Clackmannan; Clackmannanshire; Cleish; Culross; Dollar; Ferry Port on Craig; Fossaway; Orwell; Portmoak; Sauchie; Tillicoultry; and, Tulliallan; to lie upon the Table.

WEEKLY REST-DAY BILL.

Petition from Harlesden and other places, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

Petition from Stockport, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

JUDICATURE COMMITTEE.

Copy presented, of Resolutions of the Judicature Committee, on 21st June, 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

IMPERIAL REVENUE (COLLECTION AND EXPENDITURE) (GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 16th April; Mr. J. A. Pease]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 242.]

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1884.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 6th November, 1906, declaring that

Richard Black, Labourer, Royal Gun Factory, War Office, was appointed without a Civil Service Certificate through inadvertence on the part of the Head of his Department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY.

Copy presented, of (1) War Office Report on the steps taken to provide Technical Instruction to Soldiers to fit them for civil life, and (2) Copies of War Office Circular Letters relating to the subject [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Regulations as to Grants to Secondary Schools [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Postmen Acting as Inspectors of Telegraph Messengers at Salisbury.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether, in connection with the case of the postman acting as inspector of telegraph messengers at Salisbury, he will say if other men in the same office will be allowed opportunities of showing their qualifications for the proposed post by actually working upon the duty before the appointment is authorised.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I will make inquiry in the matter; and, if I find that any officers senior to the postman now employed show promise of being equally competent or any juniors more competent, I will direct that they be allowed a trial.

Postal Appointment—Case of Peter Kelly, of Tullamore.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that Peter Kelly, ex-telegraph messenger and auxiliary postman at Tullamore, applied for an established vacancy as postman in that town, and although he satisfactorily performed the duties for three months has now been informed that the post must be given to another man; and whether early steps will be taken to give Mr. Kelly an appointment.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) As the hon. Member is aware, under an arrangement of many years standing made by the Government, one half of the vacancies for postmen are reserved for ex-soldiers or ex-sailors, the other half being given to Post Office servants. I regret that the appointment referred to cannot be given to Kelly, as it has been allotted to a soldier candidate under the ordinary rotation; but Kelly's case will be reconsidered when a vacancy due to a Post Office servant occurs at Tullamore.

Royal Irish Constabulary—Examination for Promotion.

MR. MOORE (Armagh, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland by whom the recent examinations for promotion in the Royal Irish Constabulary was held for four vacancies for sergeants' promotion to head constables; whether the four sergeants who obtained the highest marks were promoted, or were any of those who obtained higher marks than those promoted passed over; and, if so, for what reason were they so passed over; and, having regard to the dissatisfaction in the service at these promotions, will he have an inquiry into all the circumstances.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The competitive examination in question was conducted by a county inspector and two district inspectors nominated by the Inspector-General for the purpose. The names of the four sergeants who obtained the highest marks were published to the force in a circular, which stated that these men would be promoted in their turn with sergeants who had passed for promotion at non-competitive examinations held under the ordinary regulations. The four sergeants referred to have not yet been promoted, but will be promoted when their turn comes. The Inspector-General is not aware of any dissatisfaction in respect of these promotions, as to which the regular practice is being followed. No necessity for an inquiry has been shown.

Irish Education.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the education proposal contained in the Irish

Council Bill and the fact that the Government have decided to drop the measure, he can say if, and when, he intends to bring in a Bill to give public control in educational matters.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I am not in a position to make any statement on this subject.

War Office Committees—Cost and Composition.

VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH (Maidstone): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state the number, composition, and estimated cost of the various Committees which have reported to the War Office in 1906–7.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The total number of Committees, other than Standing Committees, which have reported during the months from April, 1906, to March, 1907, is twenty-four. It is not practicable to state, in answer to a Question, the composition of these Committees, but generally it may be said that they have been composed of military and civil officials of the War Office, of officers serving on the staff or in regiments, of members of other public Departments and, in some cases, of persons having no official position. An estimate of the cost of these Committees cannot be given. No extra expense to Army Votes is involved by the service of members of this or other public Departments on these Committees. The chief items of extra expense would consist in the travelling allowance and railway expenses of members who have to come to London to attend the Committees, and of the payments which are made for attendance to officers on half-pay and retired pay, and to officers serving on special scientific Committees and, on rare occasions, to civilian experts specially employed. The payments to officers and to civilian experts under this head are, however, inconsiderable in amount in any given financial year.

NEW WRIT.

New Writ for the County of York (West Riding, Colne Valley Division), in the room of the Right Hon. Sir James Kitson, Baronet (Manor of Northstead).—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

FINANCE [LOCAL TAXATION GRANTS].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That if the rate of duty on any local taxation licence (including any duty charged under sub-section (1) of section eight of the Locomotives on Highways Act, 1896) is hereafter increased, there shall be added to the amounts payable to the local taxation account out of the Consolidated Fund such sums (if any) as may be required to bring the amount payable in any year to the local taxation account up to the amount which would have been payable if the proceeds of that duty in that year were taken to be the average proceeds of the duty for the three years ending March the thirty-first, nineteen hundred and seven, and if the sum ascertained to have been collected in that year in any county in England in respect of that duty were taken to be the average sum so ascertained to have been collected for the three years ending March the thirty-first, nineteen hundred and seven.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next.

LAND PURCHASE (IRELAND) (FINANCE.)

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I rise to move the following Resolution: "That, in the opinion of this House, the method at present in force for providing money for Land Purchase in Ireland has broken down in practice, and, if persisted in, will throw such a ruinous charge on the already overburdened ratepayers of Ireland as to endanger the entire scheme of Land Purchase." The question with which the Resolution deals is not an attractive one. It is an intricate one, and I do not suppose that there are very many English Members of this House who are to any appreciable extent familiar with the intricacies of Irish land finance. I can quite imagine some English Member saying to me that, after all, we made our bargain in 1903 on this question of land purchase finance, and that we ought to be called upon now to stand by it. In the first place, I think I shall be able to show that the bargain then made with the Treasury has not been carried out. Further than that, I might plead that no one could foresee, at any rate no one did foresee, that the money market would continue as it has done, and that it would remain as it is at the present moment. But apart from this consideration altogether a state of things has arisen in connection with the working of land purchase in Ireland of so serious a character that something must be done, unless either land purchase is to come to an absolute stop, or else absolutely ruinous charges are to be thrown upon the ratepayers, entirely dislocating the whole system of local government in the country. The great scheme of 1903, therefore, with all the great hopes based upon it, is at this moment in imminent danger of complete collapse owing to the state of things which has arisen. Enormous and, as I have said, ruinous charges are about to be thrown, and to some extent have been thrown, upon the ratepayers, and the whole system of local government in Ireland, which was established in 1898, is threatened with destruction. For a considerable time it has been apparent to those who are taking an interest in this subject that the finances of the Act of 1903 have proved to be unsound and must be completely overhauled, but it was only a few months ago that this growing dissatisfaction came to a head, and that people in Ireland thoroughly realised the state of financial unsoundness in which the whole system was rooted. A few months ago, without notice, the ratepayers, through the county councils, were called upon to pay £70,966 for losses in connection with the working of the Land Purchase Act. They had received no notice whatever, and had struck their rates for the year. The money was deducted from sums given to them for their share in the death duties and the agricultural grant and the Exchequer contributions. That in itself is an exceedingly serious matter, but after all its real seriousness lies in the fact that it is simply a symptom of the complaint that we have to make as to the general financial position in connection with the land purchase. It was useful in this way, that it immediately arrested attention in Ireland and in this House. Hon. Members will recollect that a series of Questions were asked across the floor of the House and answered voluminously by the Prime Minister, and the whole of the House recognised that the matter was so serious that the Prime Minister offered us this opportunity for a thorough discussion of the whole question. Let me if I can, in a few simple words explain to those Members who are not familiar with Land Act finance how this matter stands. The money which is required for the working of the Land Purchase Act in Ireland is raised by 2¾ per cent. stock, and the dividend on the stock is paid out of the purchase annuities which purchasers pay to the Land Commission. These annuities amount to 3¼ per cent. on the amount of purchase money. A ½ per cent. is retained as sinking fund, and the 2¾ per cent. which, as interest, goes to make up the income of the Land Purchase fund from which these dividends are paid. Therefore, it is apparent that if the income is insufficient to pay the dividends there will be a loss, and it is provided by the Act that that will fall upon the guarantee fund, which I will explain. Now this 2¾ land stock, too, has been from the very first floated at a considerable loss—at a discount of from 12 to about 15 per cent., and this loss is made good by the issue of what is called excess stock, the interest and sinking fund on which are charged on the Irish Development Grant Fund. This loss for discount on flotation of stock is quite distinct from the £70,000 that has been claimed from the county councils, which arises from a different kind of stock, and this loss on flotation is infinitely more important. It runs into millions of money. Now that loss is charged on the development fund, and after that it is charged on the Guarantee fund. The whole of this loss on flotation, if the Development fund fails, will fall on the Guarantee fund, that is to say upon the ratepayers of Ireland. Now let me ask what is this Development fund? In the year 1902 a great Education Bill was passed for England and an annual sum of £1,400,000 was voted for the purpose to England under that Act, and in accordance with the principle that had been acted upon for some years it was decided that an equivalent sum should become payable to Ireland. Of course, in strict justice that equivalent sum should have been spent upon the same object for which that £1,400,000 was given to England, namely, to educate, but it was not, and it was earmarked to meet, in the first case, losses on flotation of land stock. That equivalent fund amounted to £185,000 a year, and there was a charge of £50,000 a year for the first four years towards meeting the loss of working of land purchase. These four years are now up and, therefore, on making the calculation I need not go into that part of the charge at all. In that time £200,000 has been taken out of the Development fund, but the charge no longer exists. The permanent charges on the funds are £20,000 for the Congested Districts Board, and £5,000 for Trinity College. There has been already charged on this fund an annual sum of £70,253 for losses incurred in the flotation of land stock, making, therefore, a permanent annual charge at this moment of about £95,000—I think my figures are right, but they are subject to the correction of those who have official information —on the Development fund of £185,000, leaving about £90,000 a year only towards meeting future losses on the flotation of land stock. About twenty millions of land stock have already been issued, and if land stock in the future is issued to about the same amount every year and with a similar loss to that incurred up to the present, then this Development fund, in the course of two or three years, will have absolutely disappeared, and then nothing will stand between the loss on the flotation of land stock and the Guarantee fund which is, in other words, the ratepayers of the country. Now, what is this Guarantee fund? It consists of a cash portion and a contingent portion. The cash portion consists of the portions due to Ireland of the death duties, the agricultural grant, and the Exchequer contributions. The contingent portion consists of the grant in lieu of rates on Government property, grant for national education, grant for industrial schools, grant for the Poor Law (medical and educational) and the grant for the lunatic asylums of the country. I need not point out to hon. Members in this House that the ceasing of these funds, the withholding of these funds from the public bodies of Ireland, would bring to a stop the whole system of government of the country; and in point of fact, however this loss is to be met in future, no practical politician can say that it can be laid on the ratepayers of Ireland and upon those funds. Allow me to give you some figures as to what this loss will probably be. The Chief Secretary, I think, said recently that the total sum required for land purchase in the end would not be much short of 160 millions. Of that sum about twenty millions has already been raised. The issue of twenty millions more will extinguish altogether the Development fund. That will leave 120 millions still to be raised, and will leave the loss on the flotation of the 120 millions to be met by those funds going at present to the ratepayers of Ireland. I have here an interesting and valuable document issued the other day by the county councils in Ireland which met to consider this matter. Here is what they say:—

> "The average loss upon land stock already issued has been 12 per cent., involving a charge upon the Irish Development Grant in respect of each £1,000,000 of land stock issued of £4,000 per annum for a period of 68½ years. The issue of, at the outside calculation, £40,000,000 land stock would, therefore, completely bankrupt and exhaust the Irish Development Grant."

The total cost of land purchase in Ireland has been estimated to amount to £160,000,000. Therefore, after the exhaustion of the Irish Development Grant the entire loss of flotation at a discount of up to £120,000,000 land stock, will fall upon the Guarantee fund, and in the words of the Chief Secretary—

> "Every penny of loss on the scheme of land purchase will have to be borne in a short time by the ratepayers of Ireland."

Then the report of the County Councils' Committee goes on to say—

> "At present market prices land stock cannot be floated at a lesser discount than 15 per cent. At this discount the loss on flotation of £120,000,000 land stock would amount to £18,000,000. The rateable valuation of Ireland is £15,536,767. A loss of £18,000,000 is equivalent to 23s. 2d. per £ of the rateable valuation."

Going on the basis of these figures and on the basis of the money market continuing as it is now the report says—

> "The loss to the ratepayers in respect of land purchase may be broadly stated thus—a rate of 9½d. in the £ for 68½ years, an annual payment of over £600,000, a total payment of £41,000,000."

Now it is not a question as to whether these figures are strictly accurate. They are estimates based on problematical circumstances—based on a forecast of the money market and so forth, and the amount which it is estimated it will take to finish these transactions. These are all problematical matters, but still they are figures of such a character as to show to the House without the possibility of doubt what an enormously grave question this is for the ratepayers of Ireland, and how serious the question is which the Government must immediately take into consideration. Let me say a word on the immediate and small loss which I have already alluded to, and the infliction of which really arrested public attention in Ireland to this whole question. This immediate loss of £70,966 which has been deducted from the county councils is for losses quite distinct from the flotation loss of which I have been speaking. It consists of certain losses which according to the view of the Treasury ought not to fall upon the Development Fund in the first instance at all, but ought to pass over the Development Fund and fall on the Guarantee Fund immediately. This loss of £70,966 is made up of five items. The first was arrears of annuities, £9,119; unearned dividends on issue of stock, £23,750; advance dividend, £13,650; interest due but not received, £15,500; and unproductive balances, £8,977—making a total of £70,966. These losses are quite distinct from the enormous losses I have been dealing with on flotation, and they arise in this way. If all the cash raised by the issue of Land Stock was immediately issued and began to bear interest, there would be just interest enough to pay the dividends on that stock. But all the money raised by Land Stock cannot be immediately issued, and in any case there is no margin to meet the necessary working expenses and temporary losses. This loss, according to the present view of the Treasury, should fall in the first instance on the Development Grant Fund. I contend that the Treasury has not carried out the intention of the framers of the Act of 1903. It was distinctly their intention that this loss should fall in the first instance on the Development Fund. The Treasury has not carried out its bargain in this respect, and the ratepayers of Ireland have been wrongfully charged with this £70,966. Take these items: arrears of annuities, £9,119, that is not a real loss, for most of that sum has since been paid. The proportion of loss on account of the non-payment of annuities has been and will be comparatively small, and at any rate I do not suppose that anybody will object that Ireland as a whole ought to be made responsible for any default on the part of the purchasers in the payment of their annuities. I do not lay stress on that. But the second item is peculiar and is the most important of all, viz., £23,750 for what is called unearned dividends. The way that arises is that in order to make this Land Purchase Stock more attractive on the market it has been provided that a full half-year's dividend shall be paid on the first dividend day of the stock, so that stock bought in March or April would on the 1st of July have six months interest paid. Manifestly, therefore, there is a loss on the interest for some months. It is said that if that attraction was not held out to purchasers the price of the stock would be worse, and the discount on flotation would be greater. That may be so, but certainly the loss ought not to fall at present, at any rate. on the ratepayers of Ireland, but on the Development Fund. I want to know what the Government have to say on this matter, and how they propose to deal with it. That is the real important item in this £70,966. The next item is "interest due but not yet received." This also is not a genuine loss, but only a book-keeping loss. The interest which those people had to pay has been paid by now. It is a great embarrassment that county government in Ireland should be troubled by what is after all only a book-keeping matter. The last item is "unproductive balances," amounting to £8,977. I regard that as a monstrous imposition. I should say that large balances should not be left in the hands of the banks without interest to the disadvantage of the ratepayers. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover on 25th March, 1903, when introducing the Land Purchase Bill, referred to this matter—

> "This is not the only difficulty which attaches to the stock operation. There may, in the earlier years there must almost inevitably, be losses due to the issue of an amount of stock which is temporarily in excess of the amount of cash you are prepared to advance in Ireland."

I say that it was never intended that the ratepayers of Ireland should pay for that. The right hon. Member for Dover on the same occasion, speaking of the losses that might arise, said that in certain cases—

> "You have to pay your dividend on the stock which has been issued, although you do not

get the repayment at the early date which you anticipated would be the case. Then it is anticipated that there would be losses due to the issuing such a stock below par."

Then the right hon. Gentleman went on to say that—

> "Last year the House voted an annual sum of £1,400,000 to a purely English purpose, viz., that of education in this country, and we may say that in strict accordance with precedents which have been observed we now owe to Ireland or Ireland really possesses at this moment in equity an annual sum of £185,000. The losses which may be due to the discrepancy in the dates, and the losses which may be due to flotation in temporary excess of the amount under-written in Ireland we have covered by placing upon this money, which is not British but Irish money, a first charge of £50,000 during each one of the first four years. To meet the difficulty of a loss accruing from issuing Irish stock below par this Irish money will also be charged with the repayment of any additional stock which you have to issue."

I contend that in this matter the Treasury has not carried out the bargain made by the right hon. Gentleman, and certainly not the intentions of the framers of the Act. I say that as long as the Development Grant money lasted the Treasury was bound to take money out of it for the purposes I have indicated. The really serious feature of the situation is that the Development Grant Fund may now be regarded as practically gone. At any it is bound soon to disappear. How then does the Government propose to meet all these charges arising out of the fluctuations of the market, and the losses in the working of the Act, which are calculated to amount to £40,000,000? I know that no Government would throw these charges on the shoulders of the ratepayers and thereby bring county government in Ireland to a standstill. I ask the Government what they are going to do. How are they going to deal with this £70,000? And have they considered the larger question? Are they going to allow land purchase in Ireland to stop, or to starve the county councils? I take it for granted that they must be contemplating some entirely new financial scheme in Ireland. It is no business of ours, at all events it is no business of mine, and I have not sufficient evidence in my hands to put forward a scheme of this sort, certainly not on my own initiative and without consultation with experts. Has it, however, never occurred to the Government that this Land Stock at $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. sells at practically the same price as Consols at $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.? Would it not be possible to raise all the sums necessary for land purchase by the the issue of Consols and make some provision whereby the National Debt Commissioners should charge the Land Commission $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. on the money for land purchase, and leave the $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. over to meet all these losses? That to the financial expert, may seem a somewhat crude proposal. I am not a financial expert, but I want to know whether the Government have considered the suggestion and whether it is worth considering. It seems to me it is a proposal worth considering. If it is a feasible proposal, it certainly is an easy way of meeting the difficulty. But in any case I end as I commenced by pressing on the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Irish Government that this is a most serious matter, and that it cannot possibly be allowed to rest as it is at this moment. I ask, therefore, from whoever is going to speak on behalf of the Government, first of all a declaration with reference to this £70,000 which, I contend, ought never to have been collected from the ratepayers, but ought to have fallen on the Development Fund. If they admit that, will they refund this money to the county councils and take all from the Development Grant? What do they propose to do in connection with that £70,000 next year? But that being only a small and temporary question, I ask them on the larger question, have they considered their policy? Are they going to allow land purchase to come to an end, or are they to allow the county government of Ireland to come to an end, or fulfil their manifest duty—no matter what responsibility they might have had for the framing of the Act of 1893—and come to the rescue by some well-considered plan that, on the one hand, will enable land purchase to go on in the country, and, on the other hand, prevent this enormous and absolutely ruinous burden from being cast on the already over-burdened ratepayers of Ireland? I beg to move.

*MR. GINNELL (Westmeath, N.) seconded. He said it was lamentable that on this subject of Irish land, on which drastic legislative reform was so urgently needed, they were to get no such reform this year, and could have but a slender hope of it even next year. Nor were they certain that the reforms within the scope of administration would be carried out. The financial arrangements under which the present loss arose were only one aspect of the land question. To contract this still further by treating these losses as a question exclusively of high finance, and disregarding the leakage in individual cases, would be like trusting one's ship at sea, with all its occupants, to a chain, all the links of which were rotten. The losses known to the Treasury being big, glaring, and recorded in public accounts were calculated to attract attention. Great though they were, being comparatively few in number, he maintained that they were exceeded in amount, still more in gravity of consequences by the aggregate of the losses in individual cases which were not recorded in public accounts and which did not come to the official knowledge of the Treasury, and the existence of which the Treasury tried to obscure, conceal, and even deny. The loss in each individual case might be small. However severely it hit a family, however annoying it might be to a county or a district council whose income it diminished, if it stood alone it would matter little to the entire country and would be beneath the notice of superior statesmen. But when the families severely hit comprised a large proportion of the population; when the average loss on the £100 farm exceeded £1,880; when the aggregate of these losses exceeded the total loss of which account was taken by the Treasury and the forces of economic loss made their growth certain; when they threatened not only the individual but the ruin of many families, and the whole country with stagnation and bankruptcy, and when this was brought about by practices so dishonest as to justify general repudiation, the matter became worthy of the attention, if not of accountants, at least of all who cared for the welfare and peace of the country. Confining his remarks to the modest finance of individual cases, which, if not made right, necessarily vitiated the whole superstructure, he would concentrate his attention upon what he considered the most important point and the kernel of the matter, that was, the official method of dealing with the ownership of property. This method, in violation of morality, law and business principles, had been in operation since the administration of the Land Act of 1881 was placed in the hands of partisans, but it had received legislative sanction under the Landlord Relief Act of 1903. The relevancy of a method of rent fixing to the question of prices arose from the fact that prices were now being fixed upon rents without any immediate inspection. If the rents were unjust, so also necessarily must be the prices based upon them. But although unjust rents were bad, yet being in their nature temporary and binding only individuals who could escape at least through the Bankruptcy Court without involving their neighbours, the country could tolerate them. When, however, unjust rents were changed for permanent annuities calculated upon unjust rents and upon individuals breaking down, the ratepayers must make good the damage; it was impossible to deny either the dependence of price upon rent or the dangerous consequences of what was occurring. The importance of a just system of rent fixing was not diminished but enhanced by the introduction of a system of purchase in zones without inspection, by making the price depend not upon value but upon the skill of one of the parties, and the simplicity and embarrassment of the other, and by extending the liability for these fancy prices beyond the so-called purchasers to their ratepaying neighbours. An embarrassed tenant ironically called a purchaser had no more to do with the fixing of the price than a drowning man had to do with the growth of the straw at which he clutched. To avoid eviction and keep a roof over the heads of his wife and children the tenant agreed to pay whatever price the landlord fixed, and he then borrowed money, if he could get it to borrow, to pay the landlord for the privilege of being allowed to sign a purchase agreement at a price which he knew his holding would never yield and which he knew to be more than the gross value of the holding, including his own property in it. It might be said that this was dishonest conduct, but the law was dishonest towards the tenant and left him no alternative except to walk out of his home, which was in part his property, leaving that property in the hands of his co-partner, who was in effect his enemy. The landlord was paid in cash a price which was fixed by himself, with a bonus of 12 per cent. calculated upon and added to it. Money for this purpose was raised in a way in which money was never raised for English purposes and in a way which involved enormous loss, and the Irish ratepayers were bound to make good the damage. It was a system so unjust, dangerous, and indefensible, so calculated to bring about general bankruptcy and to justify general repudiation, that no free and sane people would submit to it. To boom the Act which enabled this infamy to be committed and then divert attention from the infamy itself, which was a daily and universal occurrence, to a mere amendment of Treasury rules, would be silly if it were not done by right hon. Gentlemen who knew how futile it was. The proposed amendment of Treasury rules would not in the least tackle this evil, or protect either purchasers or ratepayers against the monstrous system by which these monstrous prices were extracted. It seemed to him that this scheme was merely intended to throw dust in the eyes of the public, and was simply an elaborate pretence of locking the stable door after the steed had been stolen. It was evident that the Treasury did not intend to bear this loss which was involved by ignoring the tenant's interest in the holding and paying the landlord the gross value of the whole holding which was jointly owned. This involved handing over to one partner the property of the other, because the only thing that could be sold was the property of the one partner. The landlord was paid public money for that which they knew was not his, and the tenant in paying the entire amount paid for what was already his own property. The British Parliament, it was true, had repeatedly tried to protect the tenant, but in vain. It would be hard to devise language more clear and explicit than that used in various Acts which were intended to protect the tenant's property in his holding. The Land Act of 1870 in Clause 5 provided that all the improvements should be deemed to have been made by the tenant or his predecessors in title, and in Clause 8 of the Act of 1881 it was provided that no rent should be payable in respect to the improvements on the holding made by the tenant or his predecessors in title and for which the tenant or his predecessors had not been compensated. Similarly the tenant's pre-existing right to sell his tenancy was confirmed by the first section of the Act of 1881 as follows:—"The tenant for the time being of every holding not herein specially excepted from the provisions of this Act may sell his tenancy for the best price that can be got." That language was plain enough for every intelligent and honest man, but the administrators and the land laws had proved more than a match for Parliament. In spite of those plain enactments and of common knowledge that the tenant made all the improvements and the landlord none, the officials acted on behalf of one against the other of the two parties. Instead of administering strict justice the administrators and the landlords of Ireland held that the tenant had no property in his holding; that the thing which Parliament empowered him to sell as his own was not his but the landlord's, and that in case of purchase he must pay for what was already his own. In short, they snapped their fingers at Parliament. All the statutes to which he had referred in support of justice to the tenant still had such force as Parliament could give them, but every provision favourable to the tenant was disregarded. This insecurity obviously prevented the tenant making such improvement as a freeholder would make, although he was forced to make some improvement in order that he might be able to live. To require him legally to prove and establish the cost of all his improvements was to deprive him of the statutory presumption in his favour and deliberately confiscate his property and transfer it to the landlord. It was worse than that, because it imposed upon him, in the form of either rent or annuity, a perpetual fine for having made those improvements. The officials with the fullest knowledge of these facts talked of the fairness of charging the tenant the full true value of his holding. That would be fair if the tenant had acquired the holding in that condition from the landlord as the result of a fair business transaction as tenants did in England, but when as was the rule in Ireland the holding had never been the subject of a fair business transaction, and when the buildings, drains, fences, farm roads, and other improvements, constituting, in the case of a reclaimed farm, the greater part of its value, had been made and maintained by the tenant and his predecessors in title who had never been compensated for them, the actual value of those improvements belonged to the tenant and he should not be charged for them in either rent or price. When the gross value of the holding was ascertained the landlord's share and the tenant's share should be fairly ascertained, and the tenant should be left in undisturbed possession of that which was his. The landlord should be compelled to sell to the tenant for the value of the raw material. That and nothing more should the tenant be obliged to buy. The Act of 1881, if legally administered, would have done all this and would have settled the land question by reducing the rents to economic and just dimensions and in that way have made the landlords sell out at a smaller number of years' purchase. The partial failure of the Act of 1881 and the subsequent worry of further legislation was due to the placing of the administration of that Act in the hands of partisans. It was a heartless mockery and an insult to the people whose equities were being trampled upon, whose property was being filched in this way before their eyes, to attempt to befool them by the simple word "equity," and to suggest that an Amendment of a Treasury rule would cure the evil. The people of Ireland knew there had never been such a thing as equity as a condition of the administration of English Land Laws in Ireland, and the empty word "equity" now used to deceive them was a bird from the same nest that produced the zones. Under these spurious conditions the losses had arisen under which the ratepayers were now smarting and far greater losses and dangers were being run. It followed that so far as ratepayers and individuals were concerned, unless something more practical than a suggested Amendment of Treasury rules was done, the whole system would go on as before, and neither ratepayers nor purchasers would benefit by this debate. All the rules, forms, and instructions under which these officials worked disclosed the same strong bias in favour of the landlord and against the tenant, and therefore contributed to the loss and danger. They were all deliberately designed to ignore and by ignoring to confiscate the tenant's property in his tenant right and improvement. In this way the tenants of Ireland had been continually juggled out of their property. A reform was quite within the power of the Government if they were disposed to carry it out without any new statute. If the present Government with its ample powers and its principle of universal justice failed to discharge its duty in this matter it could only be for want of will.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, the method at present in force for providing money for land purchase in Ireland has broken down in practice, and, if persisted in, will throw such a ruinous charge on the already overburdened ratepayers of Ireland as to endanger the entire scheme of land purchase."—(*Mr. John Redmond.*)

MR. MOORE (Armagh, N.) said he did not wish to deal with controversial matters; therefore the hon. Gentleman who last spoke would forgive him if he did not follow him in the very controversial matters he had raised. He could hardly see the relevance of some of the hon. Gentleman's remarks to the Motion, the purpose of which was to enable the House to discuss the necessary means for providing the funds for the working of the Land Act and its condition at the present time. The question was financial, and largely one for experts. When they had heard the proposals of the Government they would criticise them fairly and, probably, fully; but this was really a question for financial experts, and one which only they could explain. Consols were now standing somewhere about eighty-four, and by a very ordinary sum in proportion the man in the street should be able to see that Irish land stock, which received a higher rate of interest, should be quoted at about ninety-one, and he would suggest that the attention of the Government should be directed to finding out the cause of the extraordinary disproportion between the prices of the two stocks. Some held the opinion that Irish land stock should have a more attractive name, whilst others thought it should be made better known by being planted out by means of the Post Office savings bank. These were all means of improving the market for land stock, and it was that line which he expected the Government would take, but he left that to be dealt with by experts, and turned to the very serious state of things in Ireland. The sun shone on the just and the unjust alike, and the county council authorities were complaining very bitterly of the stoppage of these grants in aid. He did not think that there was anything more than a temporary embarrassment. It might or it might not be, and he did not suppose that anyone was ready to commit himself to the principle that because the pinch was felt in 1907 it was going to continue for ever, nor were they disposed to say that the whole finance of the Act of 1903 had broken down; at the same time, it did not allay their desire to see this temporary embarrassment remedied as soon as possible, and he and his friends would always be ready to co-operate with other members from Ireland in any way in order to get over the difficulty. The whole policy of the Land Act of 1903, which was acclaimed by hon. Gentlemen below the gangway just as much as by Unionists, was that everything in Ireland had to be ear-marked to provide capital and security for land settlement. They gave it with a light heart. The civil service was to be reduced, and there was to be retrenchment in every branch all through the country. Every fund which came to Ireland prior to 1903 was mortgaged in some way or other as a guarantee of security for the purpose of working out the Land Act. It was owing to the very low price of Consols that the present pinch was being felt. That was the position, and he thought everybody who was interested in having a good market must seek to keep up the credit of this stock by every means in his power. He thought, however, that it was not good policy on the part of those who were interested in the working of the Act to say in the House that there was a chance of circumstances arising in the near future which would justify repudiation, and he should not understand that from anything that fell from the hon. and learned Member for Waterford. They had had their share of the money in all parts of Ireland, and he did not think that there was any chance of repudiation. If, however, such repudiation was contemplated by those responsible he considered that the British taxpayer might very rightly decline to advance any more money for the purpose of the Land Purchase Act. That being so, he thought Members should help the Government in every way in their power, if their proposals were reasonable, to finance the Act properly. He trusted that the Government would do what they could to meet the necessities of the present case.

*MR. JOHN O'CONNOR (Kildare, N.) said the hon. and learned Member for North Armagh could scarcely have been in the House on the 22nd April, or he would never have made use of the words "temporary embarrassment." From the answers to Questions then put from that side of the House, it was clear to everybody that the embarrassment which had arisen was not temporary, but was much more likely to be permanent; neither was the hon. and learned Gentleman sufficiently a judge to know that the breakdown was not a breakdown which affected the stock, but one that affected the Irish people who paid the rates. The loss which had to be made good by Irish rates was caused by the security being given to the persons who invested in the stock. The losses in Ireland were induced by the gains of those who dealt in the stock. The speech of the hon. Member for Waterford could not possibly affect the issue of stock. He felt sure the House fully appreciated the gravity of the situation. His hon. and learned friend had made it clear from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who was responsible for the introduction of the Act of 1903, that at all events, so far as losses by discount were concerned, they were to be paid out of the Irish Development Grant. But there still remained the large item of unearned dividends. The unearned dividends, which amounted for the last two years to £23,000, and in previous years to £60,200, were a very serious item, and he thought there was some misapprehension with regard to them. In reference to the issue of stock, the Secretary to the Treasury stated, in answer to a Question by the hon. and learned Member for Waterford on the 22nd April, that it was an open question whether unearned dividend could not be treated as a capital charge, to be paid for out of the annuity fund or the Irish Development Grant, but he added that an amending Act of Parliament would be required in order to effect that purpose. That might or might not be so. His proposition was that there was power already in the Act to deal with unearned dividend in connection with the issue of stock. He directed attention to Section 28 of the Act, Sub-section 4, which said—

> "Any sums raised by means of the stock after providing for the expenses of the issue shall be carried to the credit of the capital account of the Irish Land Purchase Fund."

His submission to the Government was that this unearned dividend was really an expense of issue, and he directed attention to Section 29—

> "The stock may be issued in such time, in such amount, and subject to such conditions as the payment of deposits and instalments and the issue of scrip certificates carrying dividends."

He submitted that the issue of these scrip certificates bearing dividends was not unlike the issue of debentures by a company. A company provided when it issued debentures that the loss incurred upon such issue was not to be paid out of profit, but out of capital. So here the issue of scrip was the cause of the loss to the fund, and not the payment of dividends. He therefore submitted that the expenses of the issue should have been deducted from the capital before that capital was carried to the credit of the Land Purchase Fund. If that was done those sums would never have fallen upon the rates, and would have been provided for, as he submitted, by the very terms of the section. There they had provision made for a charge on the special fund, but there was no provision for any loss incurred except what was provided by Section 28. There was no mention that there should be a guarantee fund or an Irish Development Grant, because, he submitted, it had been provided by Section 28, Subsection 4. There was perhaps another reason. The loss arising by the issue of scrip certificates occurred only once. If it were a continuing loss it would be provided for, but occurring only once, and that at the moment of issue, he submitted to the band of lawyers on the Front Government Bench that it should have been regarded as an expense of issue, and charged to the capital raised. If it were intended that this should fall on the guarantee fund the Act would not be silent on the point, because it expressed by a particular section where the loss was to fall when it was on account of discount. This affected the items of £63,200 and a portion of the £23,750—probably it would affect an amount of about £70,000, and therefore would cover the losses which had been charged to the rates during this year. The serious aspect of the matter was that the loss to the county councils was an increasing loss. As the development grant was extinguished, so would these losses fall upon the death duties in the next instance. It was estimated that when an issue of £40,000,000 had been made, the Irish Development Fund would be exhausted. If the £40,000,000 would exhaust the £160,000 which was available, it would take £600,000 a year to provide for the loss incurred on account of discount on £150,000,000, which, it was estimated by Mr. Finucane, it would take to carry out the whole of the land purchase transaction. That discount of £600,000 per annum must come out of the rates before the transaction was complete. There was to credit, as against that £600,000, the Irish development grant of £160,000, and the death duties, amounting to £230,000, making £390,000. That, deducted from the £600,000, left £210,000, which would go against the £727,600, the amount of the agricultural grant made under the Act of 1898; so that, after this transaction of land purchase was carried out, they would only have £500,000 left as the grant in aid of rates in Ireland, instead of £1,117,600. All that difference would fall upon the rates in Ireland. In reference to these figures, which referred to the whole country, he had to bring before the right hon. Gentleman the particular case of the county of Kildare, part of which he represented. In Kildare they had been very severely hit owing to the large transanctions of land purchase that had taken place in that county. He submitted that they had been severely hit by an operation which was against the spirit and the letter of the Act of Parliament itself. It was provided by the Act that because of the expenses on account of these matters, the grant made out of death duties should first be made applicable to the loss, before the Agricultural Grant was touched. Now, by what operation did it come to pass that, while the Irish death duties were still, he would not say intact, but were unexhausted, any portion came upon the Agricultural Grant? He submitted that the process by which it was done was in opposition to the terms of the Act itself. What was the operation? First of all, there was allocated to each county its proportion under the Agricultural Grant. If there should happen to be a loss on these transactions, first and foremost the amount allocated to the county under the head of death duties was seized upon, and if that was not sufficient to cover the loss in respect of purchases within the confines of the county, then the Agricultural Grant had to supply the money necessary to meet the loss. He submitted that that was a wrong process. He submitted that the whole of the death duties ought to be made available for the entire loss before the Agricultural Grant was touched. He submitted that proposition on the terms of Section 40 of the Act.

Attention called to the fact that forty Members were not present. House counted; and forty Members being found present,

*MR. JOHN O'CONNOR, resuming, said that nothing could be clearer than the terms of the section, and he submitted that the rules made in 1904 by the Lords Justices of Ireland were *ultra vires*, because they were in contradiction to the terms of the section. He submitted, therefore, that the death duties, amounting as they did to £230,000 a year, ought to have been first made available, and, if that had been done, Kildare would not have suffered to the extent she had. The whole of the amount allocated to Kildare, over £2,000 under the death duties, was first seized, and it was necessary to deduct from its share of the Agricultural Grant about £5,000, in order to meet the losses upon the sales that were carried out. He submitted that there was nothing in the Act, or in the Treasury Rules of 1905, that would enable the Local Government Board to carry out the transaction in the manner they had done, and if they had acted strictly according to law, he submitted that Kildare would not have suffered the additional loss of £5,000, which was deducted from her share of the Agricultural Grant. His observations with regard to Kildare also applied to five other counties in Ireland. In all the remainder of the counties the deductions had only been made from the Death Duties Grant, because the contributions from that source met the deficiencies. But in the five counties he referred to, especially Kildare, the contributions from the death duties did not meet the deficiencies, and therefore the Agricultural Grant was diminished to that extent. That was a matter which needed to be looked into. He submitted that there was a provision in the Act itself to deal with the unearned dividends upon the issue of stock, and he would emphasise the words "issue of stock." He further submitted that the manner of allocating those losses to the counties was not in accordance with the Act itself, and that also needed to be remedied. If his point was good with regard to the unearned dividends, it would release, and there must be carried back, over £70,000, which would meet the losses of last year and the year before. If that point was good, and he thought it would be found to be so, it would relieve the present situation, at all events, while the Government was making up its mind in regard to a more permanent settlement of the case. The Irish Development Grant had scarcely been created before it was stolen and diverted to a purpose for which it was not originally intended. In the first place it was intended to apply to education, and then it was applied to the Irish Land Purchase fund. There was then an unused balance, and the next shuffle was to take £98,000 and apply it to the Labourers Act. Finally the whole sum was ear-marked to make good the discount on flotation of land stock. The whole thing from beginning to end was a juggle in finance, and why? Because the whole system of finance in Ireland in regard to these Acts of Parliament was vitiated by a selfishness and a grudging spirit which entered into all legislation with regard to that country. Year after year, when the Estimates came up, they could not help noticing the liberality with which England was dealt with, and the manner in which money was lavished upon education in this country and thrown about right and left, and voted to the Local Government Board for this, that, and the other purpose, to provide work for the unemployed and to carry out various philanthropic intentions. But when an Irish subject came up, when an Irish Act was to be administered and means provided, the money was found only by stealing it from some other Irish Fund. He perhaps ought not to use the word "steal," and he would withdraw that word and substitute "plunder." The money was taken from one object and devoted to another, and it was simply robbing Peter to pay Paul. And all this kind of thing was resorted to in order to evade the responsibility of the Government to provide the funds in the Estimates for the proper carrying out and administering of Acts of Parliament. It was a shameful and dishonest transaction, and could be stigmatised in no other way. Money could be provided for every other object under the sun by this Parliament except for the proper carrying out and administering of Irish Acts of Parliament. If Irish finance was treated in a more honest way there would be no necessity to occupy the time of the House in bringing forward these irregularities which were having such disastrous consequences in Ireland.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. RUNCIMAN, Dewsbury) said he felt himself at a considerable disadvantage in that, first, he happened to be a layman, and, in the second place, he was not familiar with the whole of the very complicated legislation which led up to the Act of 1903, and must in future lead to other legislation. He was in the House when the 1903 Act was passed, and any financial arrangement that was then made was made first of all at the initiative of the Government, and secondly with the consent of the Irish Party. A great deal of their trouble was due to the fact that the discussion on the 1903 Act was by no means ample, and was indeed suppressed. One result of that had been, in the first place, a misunderstanding in regard to the interpretation of the Act, and secondly, if he might say so, the appearance of faults in the Act of a very serious nature, which might have been avoided had there been anything like thorough discussion in the House at the time. They were now seeing unfortunate charges falling on the ratepayers of Ireland which might have been avoided had there been more ample consideration, and if the opponents of the measure had voiced their case with anything like the degree of energy which usually characterised an attack upon a Government Bill. In 1903 the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover, in the course of a number of very lucid and picturesque speeches, which the hon. and learned Member for Waterford had quoted, laid down the policy of the Government. He then declared that the original intention was that the Development Grant should bear some of the charges which in their sum total amounted to £70,000 this year. The suggestion was made by the hon. and learned Member for Waterford that some of those charges should have fallen this year on the Development Grant and not on the guarantee fund. On that specific point, the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover was that—

> "The loss which may be due to discrepancy in dates and the loss which may be due to flotation in temporary excess of the amount underwritten in Ireland will be covered by placing on this money, which is not British money, but Irish money, a first charge of £50,000 during each one of the first four years."

It was not until those four years had elapsed that the present situation arose and the burden was thrown upon the guarantee fund. Therefore he suggested that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover was actually stating what was the bargain between the Treasury and the Irish Government at the time, that the four years which the hon. and learned Member for Waterford now referred to had expired, and that the provisions of the Act must govern the financial transactions. But they were not governed by the speeches of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover. He admitted it was very difficult to inquire into the right hon. Gentleman's mind and discover exactly what the intentions of the Irish Government at that time were and what might have been the arrangements made between the different Parties in the House. The predicament they had been in was that they had to administer, not speeches of the right hon. Gentleman, which might have led them into trouble in more ways than one, but the Act for which he was responsible. He had no idea what the right hon. Gentleman was likely to say to-day on the subject of this Act, but they had to take the provisions of the 1903 Act as they stood. They were bound by the law just as if they were Judges declaring what the law was and not by the speeches of the promoters of that law. Therefore if there was any discrepancy between the right hon. Gentleman's speeches and the Act, it was a discrepancy which the right hon. Gentleman would have to explain away.

MR. WYNDHAM (Dover) said the Clauses were drawn by the Treasury.

MR. RUNCIMAN said, if that were so, the right hon. Gentleman should have criticised them, because he alone was responsible for the wording of that Act. The specific items which made up the sum of £70,000 could to some extent in the future be dealt with rather differently. In every case they had acted within the four corners of the 1903 Act, and when the hon. Member for North Kildare suggested that the rules which had been passed by the present Government were *ultra vires* he differed from the law officers of the Crown. He would tell the House what he believed to be possible within the law as they now found it. The first big item in the total of £70,000 was the bonus, or unearned, dividend charge. In view of the opinion of the law officers, the only way to relieve local authorities from this charge would be either by an amending Act, providing that the bonus dividend should be treated as an expense of issue, or an entirely new interpretation of the Act. He did not anticipate the latter, and, therefore, this year, in order to relieve the Irish ratepayers of the heavy charge, they had made arrangements with the Treasury, which would require a good deal of manipulation, that there should be no public issue, and that would do away altogether with this charge. The total amount which would be issued during the current calendar year would be absorbed entirely by the National Debt Commissioners and the various departments with which they acted, and the result of that would be to avoid any charge whatever for bonus dividend.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): What does the hon. Member mean by bonus dividend.

MR. RUNCIMAN said he meant the unearned dividend. The next item, advance dividends, they proposed to meet by charging the purchaser an additional month's interest on his first gale. Owing to a gap, the tenant purchasers might be required to pay an extra month's interest up to 1st July or 1st January, and effect would be given to the proposed arrangement by an alteration of the Treasury Rules, if the tenant purchasers would agree.

MR. CLANCY: It is not intended, as I understand, to make the tenant pay thirteen months interest instead of twelve? It is not intended to make them pay additional interest?

MR. RUNCIMAN: No; it was only a rearrangement. In the first half-year he would pay seven months interest, but afterwards six months for the remaining half-years of the period of sixty-eight and a half years. This was because the gale day on which the month's payment should be made was one month earlier than the dividend day. That was necessary to enable the dividends to be paid over to the National Debt Commissioners. If the tenant purchasers were prepared to take that burden upon themselves, they could at once, within the four corners of the Land Act of 1903, give effect to it, and relieve the ratepayers of the burden.

MR. CLANCY: Will the tenant purchaser get credit for this one month's advance interest?

MR. RUNCIMAN: Certainly, at the end of the period he would get credit for it. The next item, that of accrued interest, was not charged against the guarantee fund; it was now provided for out of the balances remaining under the Labourers Act of last year. They would, therefore, have no further charge in respect of it.

MR. WYNDHAM was understood to ask for details of the arrangement in regard to accrued interest.

MR. RUNCIMAN said that accrued interest was the interest due in respect of amounts which did not receive interest all on the one day which fitted in with the working of the Act, and therefore they had interest accruing from day to day, which had not yet been received; and therefore the gap occurring had to be provided for out of funds which must be raised out of the guarantee fund. It was an ordinary sort of current account charge which would occur in an ordinary business transaction. This was now provided for under the Labourers Act of last year. The temporary arrears were a charge, however, which he understood no one wished to take off the guarantee fund. He understood that was to remain exactly as it was. If he interpreted the hon. and learned Gentleman rightly, he took it that if arrears occurred, the guarantee fund, in the view of hon. Gentlemen opposite, should bear that burden. It was the one guarantee they had of the punctual and full payment of all land purchase charges.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Personally, I am not at all afraid of that.

MR. RUNCIMAN said he took it that that was the view. They were therefore left with the three items—the bonus dividend, the advance dividend, and the accrued interest. The advance interest was, as he had said, dealt with under the Labourers Act, and it could only be met by the purchaser in the first half year paying seven months instead of six months interest, and the bonus dividend which could only be met either by an alteration in the law, or an upsetting of the law as it now stood. There was the larger question, how they were to meet the enormous deficiency on the issue in respect of these great transactions, and that was not one with which he was prepared to deal at the present time. The figures given by the hon. and learned Gentleman were substantially correct, and it was quite clear that the enormous difficulty that the money market now imposed in connection with the Development Grant would absorb the Development Grant in about two years unless the market improved. That really was a very serious matter. As to the charge of £70,000, he was not competent at present to make any statement whatever upon that. His right hon. friend would refer to the questions raised in the debate.

MR. AINSWORTH (Argyllshire) said the speech of the Financial Secretary, though interesting in itself, did not touch the crux of the question. The plain question now before the House and the country was how were they to find £100,000,000 at least to deal with the Irish land purchase scheme? This country was committed to the policy of land purchase in Ireland, and they all hoped it was going to be a success. He might remind the House that John Stuart Mill said that it was the only solution of the land question in Ireland. What they had to consider now was whether some means could be devised for hastening the procedure and enabling the system which had already succeeded well in a few cases to be carried out with the utmost speed over the whole of Ireland. He thought a great many people had now come to the conclusion that it was a mistake in the original Land Purchase Act to provide for payment of the purchase price being made to the landlords in cash. There was considerable difficulty in raising the cash in London, and then when it was sent over to Dublin the first thing that was done by the proprietor who had sold his land was to pay off the mortgages, and the probability was that the mortgagee was not particularly anxious to be paid off, for he had to send back the money to London to be reinvested. He thought the depreciated value of land stock as compared with Consols could be easily explained from the market point of view. Land stock was subject to redemption after a fixed period, whereas Consols were not subject to certainty of redemption within a specified time. It was not surprising, therefore, that Consols were higher than Irish land stock, the market view being that the former were more suitable for money available for permanent investment. He wished to bring before the House a suggestion which he had already brought to the notice of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The secretary and manager of one of the largest financial houses in Scotland said he regretted that the suggestion made when the late Government was in office to issue scrip in connection with Irish land purchase instead of paying in cash had not been further proceeded with; he also stated that if it had been proceeded with, and if scrip had been issued subject to repayment at par in a certain number of years, his house would have accepted it. That house, whose business it was to lend money on the security of property throughout the kingdom, had already made advances against Irish land. If the Treasury had the option of saying to the vendors of properties that in place of payment in cash scrip would be given bearing 3 per cent., and redeemable in a certain number of years, there were, he believed, a great many cases in which the proprietors would take the scrip and hand it over at once in payment of the mortgages. Would it not be infinitely simpler and more satisfactory for the mortgagee to receive scrip in that way than to get cash for which he had to find a new investment? That method of financing Irish land purchase would conserve the interests of all parties. A great portion of the scrip when issued would go at once into the coffers of solicitors and banks to be held for behoof of the parties concerned. It would come on the market very gradually, and the money market would not be interfered with if the suggestion were adopted. The hon. and learned Member for Waterford had indicated that £120,000,000 would be still required in connection with the scheme, and, if that was so, the sooner the money was found the better not only for those interested in Irish land, but also for the British taxpayers, because the sooner the question was got out of the way the the better it would be for everybody. Circumstances might arise at any moment which would interfere with the successful working of the Land Purchase Act. He sincerely trusted that the suggestion he had made would be seriously considered, and that a scheme would be formulated which would enable the purchase of Irish land to be brought to a successful conclusion as early as possible.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) said the hon. Member for Argyllshire had made a very sound contribution to the debate. He welcomed the kindly tone and spirit in which he had brought the suggestion before the House. He himself had put his name to two proposals. He had first signed the Trinity College report, which was very much on the lines the hon. Gentleman had suggested, except that they did not recommend the issue of a 3 per cent. stock, but a continued issue of the existing 2¾ per cent. stock, the seller of an estate getting it at the price of the day. Of course, that would involve some ultimate loss, but as it would not be dealt with for many years to come, by that time some further arrangement could have been considered. He was greatly astonished when that report, which came with the authority of a Lord Justice of Appeal in Ireland, was rejected by the Government. There remained an alternative proposal, which he ventured to put forward some weeks ago. He did not think the difference between the price of Consols and land stock was altogether accounted for by the 5s. difference in interest, and he could not understand why the investors of this country were not more attracted to what were known on the Stock Exchange as "Shamrocks." But as the market had failed to appreciate, the question was what ought to be done? It was a matter which must be viewed from the point of view of the Irish taxpayer quite as much as from that of the Treasury. Hon. Members from Ireland had been responsible in 1903 for guaranteeing to the British public the regular fixed payment under the Act, and he cordially agreed that anything like a suggestion of repudiation would be not only dishonourable to the Irish as a nation, but the very worst of bad business. Although he had not very much sympathy with the way in which the Land Acts had been worked, he did not think that what had fallen from the hon. Member for North Westmeath expressed the opinion of hon. Members on that side. He wished the House to disabuse its mind of the idea that anybody in Ireland wished to repudiate their obligations in this matter. To do so would be as dishonourable to the Irish people as the breach of the Treaty of Limerick was dishonourable to the English. What, therefore, they had to consider was the alternative solution, which was that the stock should be made a 3 per cent. stock, increasing the interest by 5s. He believed it would then be found that the stock would go to par. The question was who should bear the 5s. loss, and he was bound to say that he thought that the Irish people were prepared to bear a proportion of that loss. It was not a popular thing to say, but they would never get on by merely trying to be popular.

Mr. RUNCIMAN said he wished to ask the hon. and learned Gentleman in what form the Irish purchasers or ratepayers should bear their proportion of this loss of 5s.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said he had not any authority to make a suggestion of that kind; but the Irish people were committed by their pledges to a certain course of action, and they would not shrink from carrying out those pledges.

Mr. RUNCIMAN said he did not wish to be unfair to the hon. and learned Member. He only asked for information. Did the hon. and learned Member suggest that the Irish portion of the 5s. should be borne by the guarantee fund—that was to say, by the taxpayers or the ratepayers—or by the intending purchasers? That was very important.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said that that was not his proposition at all; and he was not going further to adumbrate what should be done while he was on his legs. He would not deal with this as an isolated transaction; the whole question of finance in Ireland had to be considered, and they must not look at this matter through one slit in the shutter. He had viewed with great suspicion the action of the Treasury during the last six months, as not being *bona fide*. He regarded it as a political, not as a financial, move. He knew very well the ingrained hatred of every Treasury official for Ireland. They regarded Ireland in exactly the same way as a Thug regarded his victim. It had been said that when a volcano was going to burst out into action there were preliminary disturbances, but without a word of warning a volcanic disturbance had fallen on the financial Budget of the year; and the poor peasants of Ireland had to suffer for it. He had been asked, "What would be the effect of the issue of 3 per cent. stock, and on whom should the loss fall?" When he spoke of Ireland, he included the landlords and the tenants, and in his opinion it would necessitate the landlords taking a less price for their estates. To that extent he answered the Secretary to the Treasury by saying that the loss was to fall on the landlords. But the landlords, on the other hand, were getting £12,000,000, of bonus. It was all very fine for hon. Gentlemen to sneer at the British Government, but he maintained now, as he had done in 1903, that the British Government had come forward in a handsome, generous, and magnanimous style when they offered £12,000,000 of money towards the solution of this question. He maintained at the time that it was good business, and he had not changed his opinion since then. But he did not see why some of this loss should not be borne out of this bonus. It might be said that the result would be to cause a shrinkage in the purchase operations. To some extent that was true; but, on the other side, the Government had a method of quickening land purchase operations and in bringing the landlords who were unreasonable to more reasonable terms by the appointment of honest commissioners on the fair rent side of the question. Another solution would be compulsory purchase. At the present time he did not consider that that was a position which the Government was likely to take. Although the 3 per cent. stock would inevitably have a tendency to a shrinkage in the sales, he said, on the other hand, that if the Government were fairly alert in their appointments of sub-commissioners, the tenants would be well advised, in his opinion, to have confidence that this measure would not ultimately bring about any real stoppage in land purchase, because if they reduced rents sufficiently to living rates, the landlords would be quite keen to obtain the money on a 3 per cent. stock. The bonus was there; and out of it the whole question could be solved. He begged the Chief Secretary not to ignore the offer made to him from the Unionist side through hon. and learned Gentlemen, and to bring in his Bill at once. The commitments for next session were sufficiently large, and they should accept the offer made by the hon. and learned Member in a non-Party spirit, and make an appeal to the Unionists of Ireland to facilitate the progress of the measure. The men who stood to lose in Ireland were the landlords and their representatives. They should, therefore, take a statesmanlike view of the question, and let the question of the evicted tenants be dealt with on reasonable lines. The result of their passing that measure in a reasonable spirit would react on the measure which the Government proposed in dealing with the solution of the land stock difficulty. He did not believe that any good was to be got by cattle driving, nor at this hour of the day by firing into people's houses. The Irish question as far as the land was concerned was on the right road to solution, and that road to solution was purchase. Unionists could stop it by making attacks on the "wounded soldiers" of the land war, but they must look at the question in a large way; and the promise of the hon. Member for North Armagh was one which the Government should fairly take into account. The Government could not escape from the guarantees and the pledges given by the right hon. Member for Dover, and his recommendation to Ministers was, "Do not let it be believed in Ireland that this great question of land purchase is going to be broken down."

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) said he was sorry that the late Chief Secretary for Ireland was not present to give his views on this very important question. He had been much impressed by the speech of the Leader of the Irish Party. Those who had the pleasure of listening to his statement must have recognised the command which the hon. and learned Gentleman had of the subject of the local government of Ireland. There had been a very significant interchange of ideas between the Secretary to the Treasury and the hon. Gentleman, but at any rate the Treasury were bound by the Act of Parliament, and not by speeches of Ministers made in the House. He believed that Members on both sides were desirous of carrying out land purchase with the greatest possible facility. The Secretary to the Treasury would acknowledge that the very anxiety of the tenants to have land purchase had led them to persuade the Members for Ireland to rush the Bill through; and he dared say that neither the right hon. Member for Dover nor the Irish Members had the prescience to look forward to the complications which had arisen since the Act was passed. There had been enormous losses in the flotation of the stock. The right hon. Member for Dover on the Second Reading of the Bill had admitted that there would be a certain amount of loss on flotation, but he thought that the difficulty, though great, was not insurmountable. Of course, nobody believed four years ago that Consols would remain at the low price which they now stood at, and the loss now amounted to £5,263,000 on account of the continued depreciation of the price of Consols. He thought it was hard that the ratepayers of Ireland should be called upon to pay this enormous deficit, while the landlords of Ireland were getting the benefit of the bonus of £12,000,000 without loss. He complained of the very arbitrary way in which the Treasury had dealt with these Irish funds. The hon. and learned Member for Louth had talked about the issue of a three per cent. stock, but that would involve new legislation. There had been no *mala fides* on the part of the Irish people. The purchasers had been most punctual in their payments, and he thought that it would be a hard and cruel thing, in connection with a measure which was not only just but foolishly generous to the landlords, that the loss on the operations of the Act should fall on the innocent victims, the poor tenants of Ireland.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): I think, perhaps, it is desirable that I should interpose now in this debate. Various questions have been raised of great importance, and I think all the House is now alive to the gravity of the situation. It might be said that there is £90,000 a year at present between the ratepayers of Ireland and the heavy loss which is likely to occur for some little time to come on the flotation of this Irish land stock. The Irish development grant was appropriated by Act of Parliament to bearing this particular burden, and therefore I do not think that any language ought now to be employed such as has been employed to some extent in this debate, as if the English people were to blame for having utilised this grant for the purpose of meeting this particular loss. However, there it is. We have

£90,000 a year available at present out of this fund, which was assigned particularly by common consent to that purpose—we have £90,000 a year between us and the general body of the ratepayers of Ireland. I speak as one who considers that this House is pledged by its legislation of 1903 and by the action that was then taken by the British Treasury. I say we are pledged to do everything in our power to maintain and carry out the land purchase system in Ireland. It has worked exceedingly well to this extent, that a great number of tenants have availed themselves of its operations; they have become owners of the soil, and they are paying with a regularity which excites admiration and completes the confidence which the British people felt when they consented to this measure. Bargains have been struck to the extent of over £30,000,000 between landlords and tenants who have come to agreements for the transfer of land from one party to the other. I say the scheme has succeeded. I am not for a moment going into the question as to whether the landlords have not had very good terms. I think they have. It is also noticeable that they are being paid in cash, and the heavy fall in gilt-edged securities will give them an opportunity of selecting, as I trust they will, being cautious men, gilt-edged securities and acquiring them at a very low rate, which will procure them and those who come after them a satisfactory family income. It is not for anybody sitting on these benches to seek in any way to repudiate a bargain simply because it has worked out in a particular way. The hon. Member for North Louth made an appeal to the landlords, and though there was very great force in what he said, I think we must proceed on the footing that you ought not to be parties to anything which would endanger the continuous working in the future of what was treated as a great experiment—a great experiment which required British credit, which required generous treatment on the part of the British taxpayer. I would not have anything to do with any proposals that did anything to arrest that scheme being carried out. Modifications it undoubtedly does require. Alterations in the law will have to take place as it proceeds. It has been said, I think truly, that compulsory purchase was not now present before anybody's mind; but it must have been in mind that the time would come when, after you had got the landlords who were willing to sell to come to terms with their tenants and had transferred under the operation of voluntary clauses three-fourths of the land of Ireland, it could not be contemplated that the remaining one-fourth should remain in the ownership of the landlords if the tenants were desirous to have it. Therefore, undoubtedly, compulsion in the last resort was involved in the measure as originally proposed. The hon. Member for North Westmeath has given a good deal of study to this subject. Although his views do not always agree with those of my legal advisers as to the true construction of the Act, I have never heard any proposal from him which did not indicate that he had himself carefully studied the whole system of land legislation. Modifications will have to be made, possibly very soon, in this matter. I desire to say, however, that the reason why I am so alarmed and so eager to recognise the gravity of the present situation is because I say that it does, in the words of the Resolution, endanger the satisfactory working of this great scheme. Anything which endangers that is a matter of national importance and requires the most careful consideration. We must not assume that the framers of the Act of 1903 had not in contemplation that there would be a loss on flotation. There never has been a period when this land stock has not been issued at a very heavy loss. The loss on the first issue of £5,000,000 was £475,000. The stock has never been issued at par or anything like par, and, although now lower than it was during the time the right hon. Gentleman was in power, there has been a continuous fall, and there never was a time when there was not this loss contemplated. Therefore, I do not want now to refer more than necessary, or indeed at all, to the language of the Act of 1903, but it stares you in the face. Anybody who reads it must see that from the beginning the framers of that legislation intended that the loss occasioned by the issue of this stock at a discount should fall upon the Development Grant and ultimately upon the guarantee fund. Therefore, it must be taken as a thing that was in the minds of the people who passed this Bill, and if they did not think fit to call greater attention to it that is not the fault of the present occupants of this Bench, who are absolutely bound hand and foot and can only carry it out till it is altered. Therefore, there is this heavy loss. In two and a half years time there will be, unless times change, this heavy burden cast upon the rates. I do not want to say a word about that. I am sure the ratepayer in Ireland is as willing as the ratepayer everywhere else to pay his fair share, but to cast upon him this enormous obligation for a period of sixty-eight and a half years is another matter. I do not want to exaggerate it. I hope Irish land stock may rise, but I cannot hold out any prospect that this loss as it now stands will not ultimately to some very considerable extent fall upon him. Any notion of repudiation of the stock I also entirely repudiate. We have not sunk to the level of a South American Republic. I do not think that has entered into the mind of anybody, and I hope it will not enter into the mind of anybody, because nothing could be more injurious than to use language about this stock which will keep it down. I have never been able to understand why Irish land stock does not occupy a much better position in the market than it does. It is impeccable. It is better than Consols in the rate of interest, and it has the whole of the Consolidated Fund behind it. So long as this Empire is an Empire the holders will get all they bargained for. They will get their interest, and they will be paid for it at par at the end of seven years. There is nothing between them and the fullest realisation of their hopes when they make their investment. Why it is unpopular on the Stock Exchange I do not know. The hon. and learned Member says it is called "shamrock" stock. I believe it is called "bog" stock. But whether it is called shamrock stock or bog stock, it is the best stock in the world, having regard to the guarantee that is behind it and the interest that is paid for it. I hope, therefore, we shall not say anything which will interfere with the public esteem of that security. Why it is not popular I cannot understand. We all know the traditional character given to Consols by Sydney Smith; and it may be that there may have been some obstacle placed in the way of making this stock popular. If any honest means can be adopted to remove that measure of unpopularity I am quite sure the Treasury will do their best. The public service are themselves large holders of this stock. As the Financial Secretary said, the present new issue of £6,000,000 is being taken up by the public service, and everything that can be done will be done for that purpose. But we have to consider what possibly can be done to secure an improvement in the state of the case. Of course it has been suggested to us that the landlords might be paid in stock instead of in cash. That is going back to the system which has worked very well under the previous Land Acts, but it would be a very violent interference with the bargain of 1903. The objection of the landlord would be obvious. He would only get £83 instead of £100 at present prices. You may point out to him that, having regard to the low price of gilt-edged securities, he will be able to invest his £83 upon a most satisfactory return, but I do not know that that would be likely to get over his objection. You really cannot throw the whole obligation of settling this question upon the Treasury. You cannot turn to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Financial Secretary and say "You have got to settle this." There are three parties to the bargain. There are the landlords, the tenants, and the Irish ratepayers. They have got to put their heads together and to give assistance in this matter to the Treasury. The great scheme brought in by the late Government has undoubtedly worked badly in the result by tending to throw, and apparently very shortly throwing, upon the ratepayers of Ireland a much greater burden than it was ever contemplated that they should be called upon to bear. It is language of the Act. There is no getting out of it. No ratepayer, nor anybody else, could say it is not. So far as the loss on flotation is concerned, it stares them in the face. The £12,000,000 of money was a gift, and I certainly quite agree with the language employed by the hon. and learned Member. I think, on the whole, it was a generous gift made by the general taxpayers of this country to bridge over the gap—there is always a gap in these matters—between what the landlord wanted and what the tenant felt he could properly and reasonably give. That gap was made up by this gift. On the other hand, there is, I think, some justification for the suggestion that the bonus should be made to pay some portion of this loss. The landlord may very fairly be required to contribute his part towards the difficulty which has arisen, and which, unless it is alleviated, will crush the ratepayers of Ireland and inevitably lead, somehow or another, while we are in the very middle of the stream, to the cessation of what was intended to be a final national settlement of the Irish land question. I think, therefore, that that suggestion ought not to be lost sight of. Then there is the suggestion of new stock at 3 per cent. That is a suggestion which is favourably regarded by the Treasury so far as they have had yet a complete opportunity of going into it. It would require legislation. It would, I presume, alter the period of years over which the purchase annuity system is to extend. It would probably require the increase of the sixty-eight and a half years to a greater number. But that does not alter the gravity of the situation. What I am concerned about is that, this being a voluntary arrangement between landlord and tenant, they should continue to act on it to the general good of the community, and that is hardly likely to be the case if there is a great loss to ratepayers, and people who are not personally concerned in the matter are called upon to bear a heavy burden which, perhaps owing to the fault of their representatives, they never thought they had any liability to undertake. Therefore, this is really a matter in regard to which the landlords, the tenants, and the ratepayers, now that the gravity of the situation has been brought home to their minds, must make some suggestions. There is, first, the idea of paying the landlords in stock. I do not think that is an idea which we can recommend to the House, because I think it would be a departure from the bargain which has been struck, and when once a bargain has been struck I do not think the parties ought to go back upon it simply because it has turned out rather more advantageously than was expected for one side or the other. Another suggestion is that the landlords' bonus should be used for meeting these discount charges. That suggestion was made, I think, by the hon. and learned Gentleman. I have no doubt that that also would be very hotly resisted. It would not, I am afraid, obviate all the loss, because, although I hope some day such a stock might reach par, we have nothing at the present moment which would justify us in supposing that it would reach par. Therefore, even under such a stock there would be some loss; but I think it would be a much smaller loss, and consequently the call upon the £90,000 which is between us and destruction would be less. Therefore, I can only say that it is a proposal which will require careful consideration at the hands of the Government. Then there is the notion in some people's minds of the issue of Consols. I am bound to say that that is a suggestion which is not smiled upon by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The increase in the National Debt is the very last thing he wishes to be connected with; all his efforts are in the opposite direction. Therefore, I do not think the issue of Consols can be regarded as a likely way out of the difficulty. Then there is the idea that the Treasury should bear all the loss themselves. Of course, that recommends itself at once to what, in Ireland, is called all creeds and classes. But if I accepted that proposal, even though it recommended itself to all creeds and classes, I am not sure that when I got back to England and knocked at the door of the Treasury I should not meet with almost as cold a reception as that which at the present time is almost always accorded to me. I do not think it would be honest if we were to assume that the Treasury will calmly take upon itself the whole of this burden. We know there are people who think that all these things are mere book entries, and it does not matter to the Treasury what happens. It is not a sinking fund really. They do not keep it in a box and keep it there, and at the end of sixty-eight and a half years open it, and say, "Oh, here is the 100 millions of money that we have been advancing all these years to the people of Ireland." They do not do that. They get it for purposes of their own. You cannot suppose that at any time you can go and ask them for money, and it does not affect them. That is, if I may use the expression, utter nonsense. There is no difference between a company's keeping accounts and an individual's keeping accounts. If you make people a loan you have to secure by the process of a sinking fund that at the end of the time the money will be repaid, just as a prudent man who buys the lease of a house at an expenditure of £3,000 or £4,000 sets aside a certain sum annually—he will invest it in Irish land stock if he is a wise man—so that at the end of the lease he will be none the worse. Therefore, although the natural man within me induces me to regard it with favour I think the Treasury has an unanswerable reply to any such demand as that. Speaking on behalf of the Irish Government, all I can say is that the Irish Government is determined to do all that it can to carry out, subject to such modifications as from time to time may be necessary, the general scheme of land purchase in Ireland; and it will not willingly become a party to or do anything or abstain from doing anything which will have the effect of interfering with the maintenance of that system, so that it will come to an end—I hope a peaceful and successful end—in ten, fifteen, or twenty years. We therefore consider ourselves as pledged to carry out the system of land purchase. We recognise the difficulties, and although they are there facing you in the Act—not things coming by surprise, not things that ought to take anybody by surprise—we do recognise that, owing to the low price at which the land stock continues to be issued, a heavy loss is likely within a short time to fall on the ratepayers, and that this would be likely to endanger the system of land purchase; and we are determined before the £90,000 which is still left to the development grant is exhausted to make proposals to the House which will mitigate, and, I hope, reduce to quite bearable proportions the loss falling on the ratepayers. I repeat that this is a question which the landlords, no less than the tenants and the ratepayers, will have to consider as one upon which it is for them to make suggestions, that they will most likely have to bear loss in some way between them, and that scheme which is the best of the various schemes which have been suggested, and other schemes will receive the fullest consideration by the Treasury. We are quite alive to the gravity of the situation. We feel that something must be done if we are to carry out—as I hope by the general sense of the country we shall be allowed to carry out—the great scheme of Irish land purchase.

MR. WYNDHAM said that he had thought it might probably be his duty to take part in the debate, but what had last fallen from the Chief Secretary had made him less sure that it was his duty to speak. The right hon. Gentleman had said that the Government considered themselves pledged to continue the system of land purchase in Ireland, and that the losses, due to whatever cause under that system, ought not to fall in any, except an insignificant, degree upon the Irish ratepayers. The first proposition there would be time to examine. Some two years were to elapse during which suggestions were invited from all parties concerned; but upon this proposition he might say that the Government would not continue the system of land purchase in Ireland if they reverted to the payment of landowners in stock. He claimed high financial authority for the system of cash payments to the landlords—not only that of the late Lord Ritchie, but of Lord St. Aldwyn. There must be a stable medium of exchange between two such parties as the Irish landlord and the Irish tenant. They had conflicting interests, and it was only after considerable difficulty and long negotiation that they arrived at an understanding. The understanding was that the tenant in future would have to pay so much a year and the landlord would receive a sum of money which he could invest to yield him a certain income which would be less, but not much less, than his net income on a second term rent basis. If they were going to pay them in a medium which, like that of Consols, had varied from 113 to eighty-four in a few years, they were making it impossible for the two parties so situated to come to agreement. The announcement that the Government would not adopt the plan of paying the landlords in stock was implicitly conveyed in the statement that the Government intended to continue the present system of land purchase in Ireland.

He regarded the observation of the Chief Secretary that the losses on flotation must have been in the minds of the authors of the Act of 1903 as an invitation to him to repeat what he believed was clearly said in 1903. It was not unusual to find that an Act of Parliament did not fully carry out the intentions of the authors. Often one Court was found saying that an Act meant what the authors said in their speeches that it meant, another Court saying it meant something else, and finally the House of Lords saying that the authors of the Act were, after all, able to express themselves intelligibly in the Bill. It was not to be supposed that the Treasury was going to be at law with the Irish county councils. It was, therefore, pertinent for Parliament to inquire what the authors of the 1903 Act contemplated, and what was anticipated with all but unanimity by all parties in the House. They were confronted in 1903 with three categories of possible loss. About one there was no dispute. Everybody agreed that when losses accrued owing to the default of the purchaser or his delay such loss did fall on the guarantee fund, but the value of the holding was there as full security, and the only difficulty to deal with was the payment of interest and sinking fund on the amount advanced, a difficulty which arose solely on the depreciation of the value of Consols and other gilt-edged securities. Going on to the other two categories of loss, the Chief Secretary had dealt with one category—losses which accrued from the Government of the day authorising the issue of stock bearing a dividend almost at the date of issue; losses arising from the dividend payable on the stock being due before the half-yearly payment of the purchaser was due; losses arising as they might, and he thought perhaps did, arise, by the issue of stock for the round value of five or six millions, and then finding that the whole of that value could not be advanced immediately; losses arising from unexpended balances being left uninvested in the hands of those who had managed the finance of the Act. It was never intended that losses accruing on any one of these accounts should fall upon the ratepayers of Ireland. They were confronted with losses from issue at a discount. The Chief Secretary would not be surprised if he told him that the solution of the Act was not the solution advocated in the first instance by the Irish Government, and when the loss due to issue of stock at discount was by agreement placed in the first case on the Irish Development Grant, it was clearly understood that other losses arising from what was called management of the finances were not to fall upon the ratepayers. They were legislating in anticipation, and when the Development Grant Act was brought in almost at the same period the *minutiæ* of financial calculation had not been completely threshed out; and the proper management of the finances and the way in which the sum of £200,000 from the Development Grant, referred to in Clause 38, was to be used in order to obviate any loss would have been threshed out upon a Bill which he introduced in the next year dealing with and transferring certain economies and unused sums of money to the Irish Development Grant, to which a clause was attached dealing with this question of £200,000. That Bill did not pass. He ceased to be Chief Secretary, and that clause was tacked on to the Labourers Act of last year by the present Government. If it had been his good fortune to handle that matter, he would then have been in a position to make it clear that all those losses on what he might call the management of the finance of the Land Act, as distinguished from loss on flotation at a discount, were to be met, and, in the opinion of the Treasury, could have been met, if they started with a working capital of £200,000. That was not an unintelligible opinion at the time when it was held. The difficulties of the present situation created by the fall in Consols did not confront the authors of the Act of 1903. The South African war had been over for a year, Consols were above 90, and there was an anticipation that they would rise to 96.

MR. RUNCIMAN said that as the right hon. Gentleman had definitely suggested there was an understanding with the Treasury that the whole of the expenses of working the finances of the scheme should fall on the Development Grant, perhaps he would explain why there was a provision in the Act that they should be met out of the Guarantee Fund.

MR. WYNDHAM was sorry the hon. Gentleman had interrupted the flow of his argument, as the matter was complicated and not easy to make clear. The expectation in the minds of the authors of the Act was that the losses due to the managing of the finances of the Act could be met if the managers started with a working capital of £200,000 in hand; and the provision referred to, which was in one of the financial clauses covering many cases, must be read in the light of the fact that this £200,000 was to be taken out of the Guarantee Fund and set apart for that particular purpose. Moreover, the question of the bonus dividend was never before the authors of the Act. That was an arrangement by the Treasury. Surely it would be agreed that, if the inducement of a dividend at an early date was held out in order to get stock at 88 instead of 86, it was only another way of floating stock at 86 instead of 88. If it were floated at 86 there would be a greater discount, and the loss would fall on the Development Grant and not on the Guarantee Fund. The Treasury were responsible for the management of the finances of the Act, and if they selected one way instead of the other, surely they should not charge the loss involved against the ratepayers. Certainly to charge the loss to the ratepayers was against the intentions of the authors of the Act. But these losses incidental to the management of all great financial transactions were small in comparison with the difficulty which they had apparently now to face—the losses accruing from floating the parent stock at a considerable discount. At the passing of the Act there was no reason to anticipate that Irish Land Stock would stand at 84 in the present year. The hon. Member for Waterford seemed to argue that it was almost a hardship to place the incidence of this loss on the Development Grant, which was primarily intended for education. Under the Education Act of 1902 an additional sum of £1,400,000 was made available for education in England. The Government felt that Ireland was entitled to some set-off against that sum, and as there were then no new services required for education in Ireland, they adopted the principle of earmarking the equivalent grant to Ireland as a development grant. They also felt that, as they were asking the House of Commons to pledge British credit for advances of £100,000,000 for land purchase and to vote a grant of £12,000,000 for the same purpose, they could not also ask it to take up the liability of the loss on the flotation of the stock, and accordingly they thought as this money was due to Ireland it was only reasonable to hypothecate the development grant to cover the loss in the first instance on the issue of the stock below par. It was not his duty to throw out suggestions to the Chancellor of the Exchequer as to how the difficulty was to be got over. The Secretary to the Treasury had dwelt upon the mysterious subject of the accounts which the Treasury kept. As he understood the present difficulty, owing to the fall of stock to 84, the £3 5s. paid by the Irish purchaser was insufficient to provide for the 10s. to the sinking fund as well as for the interest. In these circumstances the Treasury said the sinking fund of the stock became absorbed in the payment of the interest. But, if this bookkeeping view was to be adopted, the present position of the sinking funds of the earlier Land Purchase Acts must be borne in mind. Under the Ashbourne Acts the sinking funds of £1 and £1 5s. were calculated upon the then high value of Consols; and now that Consols had fallen to £84 these sinking funds had a far greater purchasing capacity and redeeming power than was contemplated at the time. The Treasury could not have it both ways. If because of the fall in stocks now the Irish purchaser had to extend his period or to pay more, or if the landlord had to sacrifice part of his bonus, then the Treasury must take into account the fact that the sinking funds of the earlier Acts were helping them far more than was anticipated when those Acts were passed. When the premier securities were at a premium the Treasury could have said, and no doubt did say, that the sinking funds would not go far enough, that they would not pay off £100 as soon as they anticipated, but that if they ever fell the Treasury would get the benefit. That was what might be called taking the rough with the smooth. But would the Chancellor of the Exchequer say that they would never have the smooth again? Did he think that Consols and 2¾ per cent. Guaranteed Stock would never rise again? If he did think they would rise again, then there was no reason why he should not pay temporarily these losses in the hope that, when stocks were at a premium again, he would be recouped. As matters were now, Ireland stood all the risk. Ireland in the Act was given a prospective benefit to be derived at any time when our premier securities reached par again or rose to a premium. It would be perfectly fair for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say, "I will take the risk instead of you, but when and if our securities are ever at par or a premium then that advantage must accrue to the British Treasury." If, however, the Government took such a gloomy view of the future as to suppose that eighty-four, or anything approaching eighty-four, was likely to be the figure for Consols and 2¾ per cent. Stock, then it was going to be all rough, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not entitled to credit the Exchequer with the greater purchasing capacity of the sinking funds paid by the purchasers under the earlier Acts. £10,000,000 worth of land was purchased under the Ashbourne Act, and £32,000,000 under the later Act, at a time when Consols were above par, and if the Government believed that Consols would be above par again then they should share the risk with Ireland and credit the fund with the increase of purchasing power under the earlier Acts. Of one thing he was certain—that they could not alter the terms on which the landlords and the tenants had come to an agreement. The Chancellor of the Exchequer might say, "Well, but then your solution would be to allow men who purchased with a sinking fund of £1 when Consols were above par to continue paying for a much shorter period, for Consols are now at eighty-four." But would he say that? and, if he did not, he must, he thought, conclude that the parties must abide by the terms which they made. Thirty-two millions had been agreed to under this Act. He did not see how the right hon. Gentleman could go back on the agreements which had been entered into in respect of those £32,000,000. If he did not, and if he did not propose to give a shorter period of repayment to those who had purchased under the Ashbourne Acts, he trusted the right hon. Gentleman would not reject from his mind altogether the suggestions which had reached him, that they might take a year to think about this question and ultimately discover some way by which not only the ratepayers of Ireland might have this menace removed from their heads, but by which landlords and tenants should continue to bargain under terms which, on the whole, had not proved unsatisfactory to either class. The Government had only recently become doubtful of the superstructure of the Act. Last year they placed the whole finance of the Labourers Act upon the same foundation, and they had introduced a scheme which would have allocated £650,000 to Ireland under the Council Bill. A Government with such resources at its command surely did not think it necessary to say that the Irish purchaser must pay one month additional to make up the broken period between the dividend and the annuity, and was not going to despair of the future and say that Consols were always to remain at eighty-four. If that was not their opinion, there was no case for taking any hasty or violent action now. He remembered that when Consols were at a great premium many people, including the Treasury, were alarmed in regard to the arrangements as to Post Office securities, and thought they were not as satisfactory as when Consols were at 100. They need not have entertained that alarm. The high premium soon vanished. Some people attributed it to the war; others asserted some doubts as to the soundness of investments in America and the Colonies, and said this caused a glut of money at home. He wished there was a glut of money to-day. Nobody could prophecy the future of finance or that Consols at 114 would fall to eighty-four. Why were they to believe they would never rise to 114 again? It was absurd to say that people were going to pay sinking fund and interest at such and such a rate for sixty-eight and a half years. They did not know what the interest would be on first-class securities five years ahead. It depended on many circumstances which could not be counted at this moment. He trusted the Chancellor of the Exchequer therefore would take a more cheerful view of this matter, see that land purchase should go on, and discard the solution of allowing losses to fall on the ratepayers of Ireland which were never intended so to fall. If the right hon. Gentleman saw his way to make Consols what they were intended to be, the consolidation of all our debts, all these difficulties would vanish, and in his humble opinion he believed the credit of the country would be stronger than it was when we masked our liabilities under four or five descriptions of securities as binding upon us as the obligation to pay off Consols.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire E.): I do not propose to say more than a very few sentences, because the position of the Government has been very clearly and adequately explained, first by my hon. friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, and later by the Chief Secretary. Nor shall I enter into some of the points which have been raised by my right hon. friend who has just sat down. I do not, for instance, consider at all relevant to the present discussion what were the terms upon which the loans under the Ashbourne Acts were raised. That is a totally different character of obligation, and I do not see that it has anything really to do with the question we are now considering. The point raised by the hon. and learned Member for Waterford is confined entirely to the proceedings under the Land Act of 1903, and it is to that point that I wish to address myself. A good deal has been said, particularly by the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, as to the intentions of the authors of that Act, but, as in the case of every other piece of legislation, we can only construe the intentions of Parliament by that which Parliament has enacted. In other words, the statute, and the statute alone, must form our guide in interpreting what Parliament really meant. And, when we come to look at this statute, it is abundantly clear what the nature of the bargain as between Ireland on the one side and the taxpayers of the United Kingdom on the other side was. It was this. The taxpayers of the United Kingdom agreed to make themselves responsible for paying a bonus of £12,000,000 sterling to the Irish landlords. It is true that the right hon. Gentleman offered us at the time, as a part consideration for that undertaking, certain reductions in Irish expenditure, but I have not yet seen any attempt to begin any of those reductions. The taxpayer of the United Kingdom has got nothing as consideration, so far as that is concerned, for his promise to pay this bonus. On the other hand, the bargain was pretty clear—namely, that whatever loss there might be upon the flotation of this stock should be borne by the Irish Development Grant, and after that, in so far as it was insufficient for the purpose, by the guarantee fund, which means the subtraction of necessary resources from the administration of local government, and really means a burden on the Irish ratepayers. That was the bargain, written in the four corners of this Act, and assented to by every Party in the House, and it received the Royal Assent. I must say I cannot admit for a moment the legitimacy of the kind of argumentation indulged in by the right hon. Gentleman to the effect that when a statutory bargain of that kind has been concluded you are entitled to go behind it, and, by reference to *obiter dicta* and expressions of intention, to give it a different constuction from that which the Act itself really bears. As regards the subsidiary losses, let me say that we are doing our best for the time being to prevent their recurrence by not issuing fresh Irish land stock on the market, but taking up, through the National Debt Commissioners, advances made by them for purchase operations. But with regard to the really important point raised by the hon. and learned Member for Waterford, I agree that the loss on flotation is a most formidable one. I do not want to recriminate, but I think if any of us had foreseen, or taken the trouble to exercise ordinary prevision in 1903, we should never have assented to what I do not hesitate to call the improvident system of finance embodied in this Act. The landlords ought never to have been paid in cash, but in stock. That would have been more in accordance with sound canons of finance.

SIR F. BANBURY (City of London): I recommended that.

MR. ASQUITH: No doubt the hon. Baronet is very far-seeing, but unfortunately Parliament did not take his view. All our subsequent difficulties are due to the fact that landlords were not paid in stock. However, we cannot go back upon that. We are all victims. We were all falling on each other's necks in the desire to solve the Irish question by kindness, and did not quite realise the difficulties, with the result that we passed these financial clauses without adequate supervision. The right hon. Gentleman does not deny it, and we have now to make our account in the best way we can. I am confident that, if and when the Development Grant should be exhausted, nobody contemplated that the loss should fall on the Irish rates. The only contribution which the taxpayer of the United Kingdom agreed to make was the very large contribution, this bonus of £12,000,000, which was to be paid as a *douceur* to the landlords of Ireland in order to induce them to come into the purchase arrangements. When the right hon. Gentleman suggests to us that there has been an unforeseen and unforeseeable collapse in the price of gilt-edged securities which the authors of the Act could not possibly have forecast, and which utterly upset their arrangements, let me point out that the first issue of land stock made in March, 1904, or within six months of the passing of the Act, was at £87, and it was taken up at that price. The second issue was on the 3rd January, 1905, at £89 8s. 8d., while last year, when I made an issue, I secured the price of £89. So that if you take the period from the passing of the Act down to the last issue of stock, the price has slightly improved, and certainly has not diminished as compared with the price when the Act was passed. The authors of the Act are therefore not entitled to say that any change has occurred in the money market to upset the calculations they made when they brought their Bill before the House. I am sure the hon. Baronet, who knows these things so well, will bear me out when I say that I have quoted the actual figures. I am not making any public issue of Irish land stock this year, and for two reasons—in the first place, in the interests of the stock itself, and still more in the interests of Ireland, because if I had issued this stock in May or June I should not have got for it more than £83, or a fraction over, which would have represented a loss of something like 17 per cent.—a much greater loss than ever hitherto has been incurred. Happily, we shall be able, I hope and

Mr. Asquith.

believe, to provide for the exigencies of purchase during the remainder of this year with the funds we have in hand from the National Debt Commissioners, and the loss on flotation will certainly not be so great as otherwise it would be and most of the subsidiary and ancillary losses will be entirely avoided. And now I come to the future. I can assure hon. Gentlemen who represent Ireland that I do not in the least degree quarrel with the manner in which they have presented their case to-day. It is a most serious thing to contemplate that within two or three years you will have reached a point when you will have swallowed up the unexhausted margin of the Development Grant, and you will be face to face, so far as any further issue of stock at that date is concerned, with the prospect of having to throw on the ratepayers of Ireland, many of them not interested in the land question, the responsibility of making good this ever-growing loss on flotation. The Act of Parliament throws it upon them. We are not directly responsible for that Act, and we can only avert its consequences by some form of fresh legislation. Now I want to put this in perfectly plain language. I do not think this is a loss which ought to fall on the taxpayers of the United Kingdom. I think the taxpayers of the United Kingdom, in contributing £12,000,000, have done very well. But, on the other hand, I do not think that this is a loss, which, if it can be avoided, ought to fall on the ratepayers of Ireland. I want hon. Gentlemen, if they will, to be content with this assurance from me, as representing the Treasury and also the Government as a whole—namely, that we can go on for the next year, possibly for two years. I do not say that by way of suggesting that we are going to postpone longer than may be needful the consideration of the necessary legislation. But I ask you to be content with this assurance, having regard to what I have said, that I am as fully alive as you are to the necessity of revising the whole of the system of finance connected with the Irish Land Act. It would be most unwise of me at the present stage to state precisely the lines on which I intend to remodel the scheme, but it cannot go on as it is now. A $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. stock which you can only float on the market at a discount of 15 or 16 per cent., with an ever-disappearing margin of the actual primary security—namely, the Development Grant—throwing the burden on the Irish ratepayers at large, who are not willing to bear the burden, and who, I think, in justice ought not to be asked to bear it—that is a prospect which no statesman responsible for the management of the finances of this country can possibly view with equanimity or without coming to a strong determination to remedy it. I ask hon. Gentlemen to be content for the moment with the assurance that the best way of escaping from the situation is a matter which is engaging my most earnest attention, in conjunction with my right hon. friend the Chief Secretary and those who advise him. I hope that next year it will be possible, certainly before the time comes when any burden can actually fall on the ratepayers, for us to submit to Parliament proposals which will put the whole system of Irish land purchase on a sounder and more equitable basis.

SIR F. BANBURY said he thought that the right hon. Gentleman was entitled to a certain amount of gratitude for the course he had taken in regard to the issue of Irish Land Stock. His right hon. friend below him had stated that when Consols were at 114, in the year 1896, the majority of people thought that they were going up to 120. That was the general opinion. Now that Consols had got down to 84, the general opinion was that they were going down to somewhere about 50 or 60, never to rise again. After nearly forty years experience in the City, he found, as a rule, that the general opinion was always wrong. What possibly it was thought was going to happen never did happen. Therefore, the right hon. Gentleman was more than justified in delaying for the present any issue of stock, because if things did right themselves a little bit, his position would be much easier. With regard to the past, he could not help reminding his right hon. friend below him that on the occasion of the First Reading of the Irish Land Bill he ventured to talk with him in the lobby, and told him that he would never get his money at the price he thought he was going to get it at and he further asked him how, in that event, he was going to raise his ½ per cent. sinking fund. His right hon. friend replied that there was the Irish Development Grant, and he understood that, in the event of that failing, the ratepayers would have to bear it. He had pointed out to his right hon. friend that he must be quite certain that the people of Ireland would not be at all pleased to see any amount taken from the ratepayers. He then saw Mr. Ritchie, the then Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he implored him to pay the Irish landlords in stock, and his answer was that the Irish landlords were not satisfied with getting stock under the Ashbourne Act, because they could not sell it. He pointed out that the stock would only be quoted in Dublin, but that it would make all the difference if it were quoted in London where the transaction would be with the Bank of England. He could not, however, persuade Mr. Ritchie, who fell into the net of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Waterford, and, everything being *couleur de rose* at that time, nobody thought there would be any such result as they had now. As to the future, he quite agreed with the Chief Secretary that a bargain was a bargain, and that having made the arrangement with the Irish landlords, they must pay them in cash and pay them in full. But he would point out that by consent they might come to some agreement, he did not say for a moment by coercion. The hon. and learned Member for North Louth had made a suggestion that some price near the price of the day should be fixed and that they should be paid in stock at that price. Something of that sort, he thought, ought to be done. With regard to the sinking fund, it was only a question of book-keeping; they had to make the loss, and they might just as well make it in that way as any other. The Irish Secretary said he contemplated a new 3 per cent. stock. He sincerely hoped that would not happen.

MR. ASQUITH: I should not like that to go forth. My right hon. friend did not say he contemplated that. He said that was a suggestion that had been made.

SIR F. BANBURY: Quite true; he should say, that if the right hon. Gentleman was considering it favourably he hoped he would not. And he would give the reasons. The only stock they could compare with Irish Land stock was the Local Loans stock, which stood at 95¼. It was true that at that price it returned three guineas per cent. to the investor, while Irish Land stock at 84½ returned £3 5s.; but the issue of £120,000,000 of Land stock would at once cause the Local Loans stock to go down in price, while probably the Irish Land stock would rise. They could not issue a large amount of stock without depressing the market, unless there was a very large demand, which there was not at the present moment, nor was it likely to occur. The Chancellor of the Exchequer would remember that Lord Goschen, following the example that had been set by the big railway companies, had consolidated three issues into one, a course which had a great many advantages; they got a larger market for the one stock, to the advantage not only of the holders but of the Government or the company, as the case might be, issuing the stock. Lord Goschen had, to his mind, very foolishly issued Local Loans stock, a proceeding which upset the apple cart altogether, and it had a very bad effect during the period of the war, because naturally corporations, not being able to obtain money easily, came to the Government and borrowed at the very time the Government were issuing it at a lower rate. What they had to do in the future was to endeavour to consolidate existing stock, and not to issue fresh stock, as was being considered by the Chief Secretary or by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The real thing they had to consider was what was to be done in the future. It was no use looking back to the past. He ventured to say the course the right hon. Gentleman was pursuing was right—that he should not issue any more stock, that he should endeavour to pay for it as he was doing now, and that he should endeavour also to come to some arrangement with the landlords to take their payment in stock at a price to be fixed. If, as he would wish, the Chancellor of the Exchequer issued the stock at the price of Consols, he would at once save about 5s. per cent. per year. Irish Land stock yielded £3 5s., and Consols £2 19s., and that was a saving of 6s. per cent. per annum. They would be gradually consolidating the stock, and he was sure that that was the right way to act, and it was the only course which would free the right hon. Gentleman from the troubles that had come upon him.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.) said he had listened to the Chancellor of the Exchequer with some satisfaction. He understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that the question must be dealt with very soon, and that the ultimate loss would not be thrown on the Irish ratepayers, and it was not to be thrown upon the taxpayers of the United Kingdom. But the right hon. Gentleman had said that the difficulty must be met and conquered, and that he would endeavour at the earliest possible time to introduce legislation which would prevent the loss to the Irish ratepaying body. They did not expect the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or the Chief Secretary, to lay before the House a complete plan, and he for one did not expect that they should pledge themselves to any particular plan. Therefore, he, at any rate, did not feel disappointed after the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, because they had now a distinct pledge on two things, at least, which he valued, namely, that the question was of the utmost possible urgency, that it would be dealt with, therefore, as soon as possible, and that the burden was not to be thrown on the ratepayers of Ireland. He regarded that as a matter of great importance, and he was bound to say that he had not expected to hear more from the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Member for Dover had made two important admissions. He had stated that it was the intention of the promoters of the Bill of 1903 that what the Chancellor of the Exchequer had called the subsidiary loss should not, at any rate, be borne by the ratepayers of Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman had also stated that as regarded the loss on flotation it practically should be borne by the Development Grant. When the Chancellor of the Exchequer came to deal with those very important statements he had made a reply which he should have hardly expected from one who was a statesman as well as a lawyer. The right hon. Gentleman said he was bound, not by any statements of the promoters of the Act of 1903, but by the Act itself. That was an argument which might be used in a Court of law, but they were not in a Court of law now. They were now considering how the statute of 1903 should be amended in view of the altered circumstances. It had been admitted that it was never contemplated that there would be such a fall in the value of gilt-edged securities, and consequently the very basis of the finance of the Act of 1903 had gone altogether. Could anyone deny that the time had now arrived for a recasting of the finance of the Act of 1903? He thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer had exhibited a somewhat narrow spirit in saying that they could not enter into this matter according to the intentions of Parliament because they had to interpret the Act itself. In view of the altered circumstances, his opinion was that they ought now to review the whole transaction. He could not see any relevancy in the remark that the right hon. Gentleman could not be bound by the intentions of the promoters of this measure.

Mr. ASQUITH said that before a bargain was altered it was necessary to understand the terms of the bargain. He had only pointed out what the statutory bargain was.

Mr. CLANCY said that whatever the intentions of Parliament were in 1903, the whole system must be recast, or Ireland socially would be rocked to its base. Some part of this loss might be met out of the bonus without substantial loss to the landlord. Let the Government pay the 12 per cent. to the landlord in respect of his actual interest in the property only, and give the rest of the bonus to pay the subsidiary losses on the issue of stock. He thought it was rather a mean and shabby transaction to add a month's interest to the sum to be paid by the tenant purchaser. He understood that the difficulty they had raised was to be met this year by not issuing any stock at all.

Mr. ASQUITH: We shall not make any public issue.

Mr. CLANCY said that meant that they were to be relieved of this charge for one year, but he thought they ought to be relieved of the loss for past years. The Irish people had never quarrelled with their responsibility for the payment of annuities; but that was the only loss which the ratepayers were intended to bear.

*Mr. GORDON (Londonderry, S.) said that all parties in Ireland were interested in the successful working of the Land Purchase Act of 1903. They all recognised the difficulties of the position which had arisen. At the time of the passing of the Act of 1903 it was not anticipated that there would be such a great fall in the value of securities. That might have been very short-sighted, but with the exception of one or two hon. Members, both sides of the House acquiesced in the passing of that measure, and they approved of its financial provisions. If there was any short-sightedness it was shared, not merely by Irish Members, but also by English and Scottish Members. He agreed that no part of this loss should fall on the Irish ratepayers, but he could not agree that no responsibility should fall on the people of the United Kingdom. If there was any responsibility for short-sightedness, and for not giving sufficient consideration to the finance of the Land Purchase Act, the representatives of the three Kingdoms equally shared in it, for they all, including great financial authorities in the House, acquiesced in the Act. When the time came he thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Chief Secretary ought to consider how far the Development Grant should be supplemented to meet any loss upon the Land Act, and he based this claim not only upon the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer as to what had occurred when the Act of 1903 was passing through the House, but upon the fact that the Chief Secretary in connection with his Irish Council Bill admitted that £650,000 should be given to Ireland. That would not now be given in the way proposed, but no better use could be made of a portion of it than by applying it to get rid of the financial difficulties under the Act of 1903. To the ordinary layman in financial matters it was strange to look at the newspaper quotations of the two stocks—Consols at $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. quoted at $84\frac{1}{8}$ to $84\frac{1}{4}$, and Irish Land stock at $2\frac{3}{4}$ quoted at $84\frac{3}{8}$ to $84\frac{5}{8}$. Why should a poor country like Ireland suffer this loss ? The stock had the security of the British Exchequer behind it, no doubt, but for some unexplained reason it did not command what it ought to command, and he thought that those who were responsible for financial affairs should find out and remove the blot that depressed the stock by 8 per cent. It was too much to ask that the whole of this loss should fall upon the Irish people.

MR. PATRICK WHITE (Meath, N.) strongly advocated part payment to the landlords in land stock. At the present time the landlords were getting twenty-five years purchase for second term rents with three years added, which brought the price up to twenty-eight years purchase and yielded 91 per cent. of the gross income. The expense ought to be borne by the landlords, who were getting $68\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. more for their land than they would have got before the passing of the Act of 1903.

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, That, in the opinion of this House, the method at present in force for providing money for Land Purchase in Ireland has broken down in practice, and, if persisted in, will throw such a ruinous charge on the already over-burdened ratepayers of Ireland as to endanger the entire scheme of Land Purchase.—(*Mr. John Redmond.*)

Mr. Gordon.

POST OFFICE SITES (RECOMMITTED) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 :

SIR F. BANBURY said he did not see anybody representing the Treasury present, but he would like some explanation of the provisions contained in Clause 1. The Government were taking advantage of this measure to do something under the Lands Clauses Act, but he would remind the Government that there was a strong feeling in the House against the operation of that Act.

And, it being Five of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Sir **WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON** reported from the Committee of Selection; that they had discharged the following Member from Standing Committee B (in respect of the Telegraph (Money) Bill): Mr. Massie; and had appointed in substitution (in respect of the Telegraph (Money) Bill: Sir John Benn.

Sir **WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON** further reported from the Committee; that they had added to Standing Committee B the following Member (in respect of the Telegraph (Money) Bill) : Mr. Wardle.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

COVENTRY CORPORATION BILL.

Reported with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Whereupon Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to Standing Order No. 3.

Adjourned at three minutes after Five o'clock till Monday next.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 8th July, 1907.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that no Standing Orders are applicable to the following Bills: Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 14).

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Standing Orders Committee—Report from, that the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Central London Railway Bill ought to be dispensed with, and the Bill allowed to proceed.

Read, and agreed to.

Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]. Witnesses ordered to attend the Select Committee.

London and North Western Railway Bill. Reported from the Select Committee with Amendments.

North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill. Moved, That the Order made on the 20th day of March last, "That no Private Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after the 18th day of June next," be dispensed with, and that the Bill be now read 2ª; agreed to: Bill read 2ª accordingly, and committed.

Great Central Railway Bill. Read 3ª, with the Amendments; and passed, and returned to the Commons.

Great Northern and City Railway Bill. Read 3ª, with the Amendment, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [H.L.]; King Edward's Hospital Fund for London Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments.

Southend Water Bill [H.L.]; Burnham (Somerset) Pier Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments: The said Amendments considered, and agreed to.

Hull and Barnsley Railway Bill. Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to.

Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]—(Fleetwood Victoria Pier Order); Barry Railway Bill; Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway (General Powers) Bill; North Staffordshire Railway Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill—(Dunstable Order). Report from the Committee of Selection. That the Lord Southampton be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Zouche of Haryngworth; read, and agreed to.

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]; Tramways Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.]. Read 3ª (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Board of Education Scheme (Hulme Trust Estates Educational) Confirmation Bill. Brought from the Commons and read 1ª; to be printed, and referred to the Examiners. (No. 96.)

PETITIONS.

Board of Education. Petition that in any scheme of the Board, the rights of headmasters in secondary schools may be safeguarded, of Thomas Allen; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

SOUTH AFRICA.

Papers relating to a Federation of the South African Colonies.

NATAL.

Correspondence relating to the removal of certain native prisoners from Natal. (In continuation of [Cd. 3247.] December, 1906.)

BOARD OF EDUCATION (TRAINING COLLEGES).

Regulations for the training of teachers and for the examination of students in training colleges.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) 1907.

Regulations as to grants to secondary schools.

ARMY.

(1) War Office Report on the steps taken to provide technical instruction to soldiers to fit them for civil life; (2) Copies of War Office circular letters relating to the subject.

Report of the War Office Committee appointed to discuss certain Militia questions with representative officers of Militia.

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION.

Fifty-first Report of His Majesty's Civil Service Commissioners; with appendices.

COMMERCIAL, No. 6 (1907) (SUEZ CANAL).

Returns of shipping and tonnage, 1904, 1905, and 1906. (In continuation of "Commercial, No. 4, 1906.")

GOVERNMENT LABORATORY.

Report of the principal chemist upon the work of the Government Laboratory, for the year ended 31st March, 1907; with appendices.

Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table.

GAS AND WATER WORKS FACILITIES ACTS, 1870.

Report by the Board of Trade of the grounds upon which they have dispensed with the consent of the Nazeing Parish Council in the case of the Herts and Essex Water Provisional Order.

SUPERANNUATION.

Treasury minute, dated 1st July, 1907, declaring that Richard Blake, labourer, Royal Gun Factory, War Office, was appointed without a civil service certificate through inadvertence on the part of the head of his Department.

LUNACY.

Return to the Lord Chancellor of the number of visits made, and the number of patients seen, by the several Commissioners in Lunacy during the six months ended 30th June, 1907.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

RAILWAY SERVANTS (HOURS OF LABOUR).

Return in pursuance of Section 4 of the Regulations of Railways Act, 1889, of railway servants of certain classes who were on one or more occasions during the month of April, 1907, on duty on the railways of the United Kingdom for more than twelve hours at a time, or who after being on duty more than twelve hours were allowed to resume work with less than nine hours rest: Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table.

STANDING ORDERS OF THE HOUSE, ETC.

Report from the Select Committee (with the proceeding of the Committee) made, and to be printed; Minutes of Evidence, together with an Appendix, laid on the Table, and to be delivered out. (No. 95.)

NEW BILL.

QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN (COUNTY AND TOWN COUNCILS) (SCOTLAND) BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to amend the law relating to the capacity of women to be elected and act as members of county or town councils in Scotland was presented by the Lord Hamilton of Dalzell; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Monday next. (No. 97.)

TERRITORIAL AND RESERVE FORCES BILL.

Order of the Day read for the House being put into Committee.

Moved, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee."—(*The Earl of Portsmouth.*)

*VISCOUNT HARDINGE: My Lords, before the the House goes into Committee I desire, with your Lordships indulgence, to be allowed to put certain questions to my noble friend the Under-Secretary of

State for War with regard to this Bill. I have given the noble Earl due notice of all the points on which I desire information, and I am indebted to him for his offer to give me the information for which I ask. I must confess that of late many noble Lords, on this side of the House at any rate, have felt that it was not much use asking the noble Earl any military questions, because his answer invariably was that the question should first be placed on the Paper or that the Army Council had not come to any definite decision regarding it.

My object in adopting the course I am following this afternoon is that the House may know more fully what the proposals in the Bill are, especially with regard to the County Associations, which I do not consider are at all clearly defined in the clauses of the Bill. I trust the noble Earl will forgive me for asking for this information before the House goes into Committee, but I do so from the fact that upon the organisation of these associations will depend the efficient carrying out of the Government's scheme. There are in this House many noble lords who are lords-lieutenant of counties, and as we have been led to understand in previous debates that upon their shoulders will rest the responsibility of organising the County Associations, I venture to think we shall be better able to discuss the points which concern those associations when we get into Committee if we have first obtained from the noble Earl the answers to the questions which I shall put to him. I trust that in adopting this course it will not be considered that I am taking an unusual one or acting in any captious spirit, for nothing is further from my mind. My excuse for putting the questions now must be that there was virtually no discussion on the subject of the County Associations in the House of Commons, and it is most essential, therefore, that everything connected with the Bill should be freely and fully discussed here.

The points upon which I desire an answer are as follow:—(1) Have the Government any idea what the cost of the working of the County Associations will be, also what sum will be allocated as the total for each county; (2) will offices have to be engaged for this purpose; (3) what sort of staff will be needed, and who will provide it; (4) what is to be the position of the deputy-lieutenants in the future, no mention having been made of them in the Bill; (5) what will be the position of the clerk to the lieutenancy; (6) will the lord-lieutenant retain his privilege for inspecting the local corps; (7) if the association raise a loan, what will be the security for it; (8) what steps are to be taken for getting officers and men as recruits; (9) will any pecuniary liability whatever be thrown on the County Associations, and who will pay any deficit; (10) how will their accounts be audited, how often, and by whom; (11) what appeal is there from the Army Council so far as its orders, schemes, and regulations are concerned, and are they bound to carry them out; (12) does not Clause 34 give the Army Council despotic power; (13) why should the commanding officer be only responsible for the training of his unit (Clause 14, *b*), and not for punishment for failure to fulfil that training which is put down in Clause 20 as the prescribed officer; (14) is it definitely decided that, when this Bill passes, the County Associations are to be formed simultaneously and not separately.

It will be noticed that I have not asked any questions in regard to the Militia, to which I have the honour to belong, as I understand the noble Earl the Under-Secretary will shortly make a statement with regard to further concessions. But as a Militia commanding officer I would like to say this, that unless greater concessions are made, the Militia as we have known it in the past is practically dead, for I believe there is no truth in the assertion that the Militia have been saved by the compromise which has been arrived at.

*THE EARL OF MOUNT EDGCUMBE: My Lords, I, too, have given private notice to the noble Earl the Under-Secretary of three Questions of a very simple character. They are—(1) whether the lord-lieutenant of the county will be constituted president of the County Association *ex-officio*, if he is able and willing to undertake the duties of president, or whether it is left entirely at the discretion of the Army Council to appoint him or any other person they may think fit; (2) whether the noble Earl will tell the House what are to be the powers and duties of the president of the association, or by whom they will be defined; and (3) whether the Government will introduce words into the Bill to make those points clear.

I think those are Questions which we, and especially those among your Lordships who hold the office of lord-lieutenant, have a right to ask. If the duties of president are to be attached to the office of lord-lieutenant, then I think most of us who hold that office would feel that we were bound loyally to accept the additional responsibilities thrown upon us by Parliament, and by His Majesty, by whom we are appointed. But, on the other hand, as having a share in framing the Act, I think we are also bound to ascertain, as far as it is possible for us to do so, what are the additional responsibilities which we are imposing upon ourselves and upon the office which we hold. The first Question will very likely be answered by the noble Earl in dealing with an Amendment standing on the Paper in the name of my noble friend the Duke of Northumberland. But I find no other place for asking the second Question, because the office of president of the association is nowhere referred to in the Bill beyond this first mention of it, and there is not a word defining the powers and the duties of the president. It is provided that the powers and duties of the chairman and vice-chairman shall be defined in the scheme, and therefore it seems to me all the more remarkable that nothing is said with regard to the powers and duties of the president. There is nothing even said to show that the president will preside at the meetings of the association, and, if he does, how his duties are to be fitted in with those of the chairman, unless the chairman holds virtually the position of vice-president, which would not appear to be the case in the Bill. It is not that I fear the amount of work that will be thrown on lords-lieutenant so much as the uncertain and undefined responsibilities which may devolve upon him, all the more onerous for being uncertain and undefined. I hope that in the course of the debate, the noble Earl will be able to answer the Questions I have put to him.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Earl of PORTSMOUTH): My Lords, in reply to the Earl of Mount Edgcumbe I have to say that the position of lord-lieutenant in these associations will depend on the scheme which will be drawn up in each case, in consultation with the lord-lieutenant and, no doubt, with other important local representatives, by the Army Council. As to whether the lord-lieutenant will be constituted president of the association *ex-officio*, I think it would be far more convenient that we should deal with that matter when it comes up in Committee on the Amendment which stands on the Paper in the name of the Duke of Northumberland. It is our desire to consult the wishes, and certainly the dignity and self-respect in all matters, of the lord-lieutenant.

The replies to the Questions put by the noble Viscount Lord Hardinge are as follows:—(1) As stated on page 4 of the Estimate presented to Parliament (Cd. Paper 3296) the grant of £75 per company of infantry is meant to cover the administration expenses of associations. It is hoped that the cost of the working of the County Associations will be kept as low as possible. It is obvious that no fixed sum can be allocated to each county as the conditions and volume of work will necessarily vary very much. (2) The County Associations will undoubtedly require office accommodation. (3) The Bill provides for the appointment of a secretary, who will, presumably, be a salaried official, and in the larger offices additional clerical assistance for bookkeeping, etc., may be found necessary. The associations will provide what is absolutely required out of the funds at their own disposal.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: What funds?

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: The funds placed at their disposal.

VISCOUNT HARDINGE: Who has the selection of the secretary?

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: It is our intention that the secretary shall be selected by the Army Council when the scheme is framed.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: When the noble Earl says "funds at their disposal," does he mean the £75 per company?

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: The funds which will be placed at their disposal by the Army Council. The answer to Question (4) is that the existing deputy-lieutenants will not as such necessarily be made members of the associations, though it is quite possible for the schemes to provide for their representation upon the association. In future it is hoped that the honour of a deputy-lieutenancy will only be bestowed upon those who have taken an active part in the work of the Territorial Army. (5) The clerk to the lieutenancy will not by virtue of this appointment hold a position on the association. (6) The reply is in the affirmative. (7) It is not contemplated that associations will raise loans except under the Public Works Loans Act for building headquarters, etc., and the security for such loans will be exactly the same as at present. (8) The Volunteers and the Yeomanry have never found it necessary to have a regular recruiting staff other than the incidental recruiting that may have been done for them by their staff-sergeants in their leisure moments. The real recruiting has all been done by the officers and men themselves, and there can be no question as to the success of the system. It is to the officers and men of the Territorial Army and the active co-operation and influence of the County Associations that we shall look for bringing in recruits. (9) The pecuniary liability of the associations will be similar to that of a corporate body. They can sue or be sued. (10) The accounts of associations will be audited annually under Clause 3 (5) of the Bill by chartered accountants. (11) Initially the appeal is to Parliament when the schemes are first laid, and any subsequent objections may be raised in Parliament by the same methods as are at present adopted. (12) As regards regulations, Clause 34 merely amounts to a re-enactment of the existing law as set forth in Section 32 of the Interpretation Act of 1889. As regards Orders in Council, orders and schemes, as it might be held that the power of making them having once been exercised was spent, the provision in Clause 34 was inserted to clear up this doubt. (13) The officer described as the prescribed officer will in most cases undoubtedly be the commanding officer. The phrase "prescribed officer" was deliberately inserted to admit of variation in the procedure should it, in practice, prove impossible for the commanding officer to do the work. (14) As far as possible, it is the intention of the Army Council to form all associations simultaneously.

LORD CLONBROCK: My Lords, I wish to ask the noble Earl who has just sat down a Question of which I have given him private notice, and which rather follows from the answer he has given to the last Question. I wish to know whether the lord-lieutenant of the county, in all cases, will be consulted by the Army Council as to the formation of the County Associations. My noble friend stated that he would be consulted as to the composition of that association, but I desire to know whether he would be consulted as to the expediency of forming an association at all. In the county from which I come it is doubtful whether a County Association would not be mischievous, for we have no Volunteers in Ireland; and, so far as recruiting is concerned, I do not think it would receive any assistance from the local bodies represented on the association.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: In reply to the noble Lord I have to say that the lord-lieutenant would most certainly be consulted in the matter referred to.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND: My Lords, I think the answers we have received from the noble Earl the Under-Secretary have amply justified the action taken by my noble friend behind me (Viscount Hardinge) in putting the Questions to the Government. We have a little more information now than before of this scheme, which is so vaguely expressed in the Bill. But we are in this difficult position. This House does not favour the moving of Amendments of which notice has not been given, and yet even already, after the reply which we have just heard, I can see that it will be desirable that many Amendments should be laid before the House on the very points on which the noble Earl has answered.

The noble Earl said that in large counties it might be necessary to have clerks. I venture to think that not only will offices and a secretary be required, but that, unless the War Office changes its customs in a remarkable way, a whole army of clerks will be required to deal with the enormous amount of correspondence which will necessarily take place. And the greatest puzzle to my mind is how the Government imagines that £75 per company, or anything in the least like that figure, will pay these expenses. I should like to ask the noble Earl whether he can lay on the Table any estimate to show why the Government think that this sum will be sufficient. We know what the establishment expenses of county councils are. Before long many of the local offices working under these County Associations will need nearly as large a staff as the county councils.

I was glad to hear that the funds which were to be at the disposal of the associations were limited to those supplied, as I understood, by Parliament. But I was a little bit alarmed when I heard that the liability of the associations would be the liability of a corporate body. What does that mean? What is the liability of these associations to be? An association will send up an estimate; suppose the expenditure exceeds that estimate, which is exceedingly likely, what will be the liability? Will every member of the association have to put his hand in his pocket and make up the deficit? It is not the same thing as the liability of a local authority, because the local authority has the rates at its back. This association will have no security of that kind. I hope some noble Lord on the Ministerial Bench will explain what is meant by the statement that the liability of these associations will be the same as that of a corporate body, because it is a somewhat alarming dictum. There was another point which struck me very forcibly. The noble Earl was asked what appeal there was against Orders of the Army Council, and he said that the appeal was to Parliament when the schemes were laid before Parliament, and, I suppose I may include, when any alteration in the scheme is made. But there is no provision in the Bill for giving Parliament any power of expressing a voice. The provision simply is that they shall be laid on the Table of the House. It is, of course, a matter of common knowledge that Parliament has not the power of rejecting unless it be said that the scheme shall not come into force until it has been laid on the Table of Parliament for a certain number of days, and means are provided by which exception can be taken to the scheme. Unless such words are inserted the protection we have is illusory.

The noble Earl, as I understood, stated that Clause 34 only preserves a power which now exists. I do not understand what that means. Is there a power now on the part of the Army Council to make any Order, scheme, or regulation, to vary or revoke any such Order, scheme, or regulation, and to provide that such Orders, schemes, or regulations shall have the effect of an Act of Parliament? I am informed that the effect of those words is that appeal is impossible against those Orders, schemes, or regulations; that no Court of law would entertain any appeal against an Order framed under that section. If that is so, it is really giving to the Army Council the powers of enacting the law of the land. Of course, if the noble Lord tells us that that is already so, I can only confess my ignorance of the fact, for I have been quite unaware that there was any power in any body in this country to make the laws of the land except Parliament. I do not know whether the noble Earl the Under-Secretary or any noble Lord on the Front Bench opposite can satisfy us on those points; but if not, I am afraid we must raise Amendments as the Bill goes on, whether we have given notice of them or not.

No one rising from the Front Ministerial Bench,

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE said: My Lords, are we really to have no answer to the Questions put by the noble Duke? They seem to me to deal with fundamental matters which lie at the very root of this part of the Bill. Let me repeat them, if I am not unduly wearying your Lordships. We should like to know upon what base of fact this estimate of £75 per company has been arrived at. We also want to know how the corporate liability of the County Associations, which the noble Earl has revealed to a somewhat surprised House this evening, is to work. There is all the difference in the world between the position of these

County Associations and a municipal body of the usual kind. The municipal body has the rates to fall back upon. What source have the County Associations to depend on except this grant of £75 per company? The inference is obvious; it is that the association will have to make good the deficit, if one should arise, out of private benevolence. That is not a very encouraging prospect for those who are to be invited to take their place on these County Associations. There is also the question of appeals; and, lastly, there is the most important question of all—namely, whether the Army Council is to be given the right of making what I would call excrescences on this Act of Parliament without let or hindrance. I do hope that some noble Lord opposite will give us a little enlightenment on these important points before the debate proceeds further.

*THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Earl of CREWE): My Lords, I have never, I think, in the course of my experience in this House, known a discussion quite so irregular as this. My noble friend behind me was entitled to speak once upon going into Committee, and he has been bombarded with Questions from all quarters by noble Lords who have made beforehand, very kindly, precisely the speeches which they will make when these Amendments are reached. I do not propose to say anything about Clause 34. I shall be quite prepared to deal with it when the noble Duke's Amendment is reached. When that time comes it will be entirely appropriate to discuss the whole question, but at this stage it seems to me both unusual and irregular to deal with the matter at all.

As regards the first Question, which the noble Marquess put for the second time, about the corporate liability, I think it is undoubtedly contemplated that private funds will be forthcoming for the purpose of these associations, if required. But is that entirely unknown at present? Have none of your Lordships ever been asked to subscribe for Volunteer purposes? I should have thought there are none of your Lordships who have not, and what is an infinitely more serious matter at present is that commanding officers of these bodies in many cases have been forced to incur liability, which they could often ill-afford to meet, in connection with the regiments which they command. If any liability of that kind is to be incurred it is far more proper that it should fall on the County Associations than on commanding officers.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, it was with some astonishment that I heard the noble Earl complain of the irregularity of this discussion. It seems to me one of the most regular discussions that could take place. Upon going into Committee on this Bill we have ventured to put one or two very important questions, and the noble Earl seems to think that a very irregular proceeding. It is neither irregular nor is it inconsiderate, for all my noble friends who have put these questions took the trouble to give private notice to the noble Earl the Under-Secretary.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: I only received notice this morning.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: But all the information which the noble Earl requires is teeming in the War Office, and he only had to ask for it. Therefore, I think the complaint that our discussion is an improper one is rather ungenerous. What about this corporate liability? The noble Earl tells us that if the associations spend more than they are granted by Parliament the members will have to find the difference out of their own pockets. That is a very important piece of information from the Government, and any gentleman who proposes to form part of an association will have to consider very carefully before he definitely determines on the line he will take, and one of the considerations that will occur to him will be how much money will be obtainable from Parliament in the first instance. Now, what information have we obtained from the noble Earl the Under-Secretary as to the money which Parliament is going to provide? The noble Earl, with a show of great precision, said he thought £75 per company would be granted. Seventy-five pounds per company, my Lords! Why, there are in the county to which I belong two Volunteer battalions and a Yeomanry regiment—say twenty-four companies in all. Twenty-four times £75 works out at £1,800. Does the noble Earl gravely tell us that all that will be required in the county of Hertford for this purpose will be £1,800, and, if not, the money must be made up out of private sources?

Let me ask the Government whether they have not formed some estimate in their own minds of what the total cost of this Territorial Army is likely to be. I put that definite question with great respect to noble Lords who sit on the Front Bench opposite. Have they formed any idea whatever of the cost which this Territorial Army is likely to throw on public funds; and, if they have formed such an opinion, will they communicate it to Parliament? I have a further question to put on this matter of cost—How is it going to be arrived at? The Bill is not very clear on this subject. Apparently there are statements of probable expenditure to be sent by the associations to the Army Council, so that it seems that the initiative in this respect is to lie with the associations. I should like to be informed whether that is so, and whether the amount of expenditure which is to be incurred is to be initiated by the associations or by the Army Council. That is a very important matter, and one which seems to me to be capable of very clear answer.

Then notice it is said that the grant is to be on the basis of this statement. That seems clear so far, but one is thrown into complete confusion by the third subsection of Clause 3, which says that the money so granted—

> "shall be applicable to any of the purposes specified in the approved statements in accordance with which the money has been granted."

So that after the money is granted it need not be devoted to the object for which it was asked, but to any of the objects without distinction. It is important to know who will initiate the statements, and whether, when they are sent to the Army Council, the money granted in pursuance of particular subjects will be confined to those subjects. What is the general conclusion from the state of things revealed in your Lordships' House this afternoon? It is this, that the Government would have been well advised if they had adopted the suggestion we made a few weeks ago, and laid before Parliament a model scheme of how they proposed to work this Act. Had that been done, we should have been able to understand far better than we do now what the proposals of the Government are. I would venture to press for answers to these questions. Upon what principle is the sum of money which is to be granted to these associations to be arrived at? Is the initiative to lie with the associations or with the Army Council? And when the money is granted, will it be applicable only to such purposes contained in each statement, or be used generally for any of the subjects in respect of which a demand has been made?

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (The Marquess of RIPON): My Lords, I do not rise to answer the questions which have been put by the noble Marquess. Indeed, I am not in a very fit state to address your Lordships at all. But I must say one word upon his remark in respect to the objection which was taken by my noble friend behind me to a good deal of what has gone on in this discussion. The noble Marquess called the objection ungenerous. I quite agree with my noble friend behind me that it is not regular that questions relating to particular clauses in the Bill, which are about to be discussed when the House is in Committee, should be discussed at length upon the Motion to go into Committee; and I still further think that it is obviously unfair that a succession of questions should be put to my noble friend the Under-Secretary, because my noble friend is not entitled to speak more than once in this discussion. In these circumstances, if these questions are put to him one after another it is impossible, consistent with the regulations of this House, for him to reply to them. I do not make any complaint of noble Lords opposite, because we are apt, I think, to get into irregular habits from time to time; but I think it is worth remembering that upon one stage of a Bill noble Lords can speak as often as they like, and upon all other stages they can only speak once.

House in Committee, according to Order.

(The Earl of ONSLOW in the Chair.)

Clause 1:—

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said that before moving the Amendment standing in his name on the Paper, it would probably be for the convenience of the

House if he explained more or less the general purposes of the clause. Under this clause a separate scheme would be made for each county in England and Scotland establishing an association for the county. The scheme would fix the date for the establishment of the association and describe it by the appropriate name. Generally speaking it would constitute the lord-lieutenant president of the association, but in exceptional cases some other person might be designated as president. The scheme would fix the total number of members of the association and provide how many members were to be officers of the Territorial Forces, representatives of county and borough councils, and, if there was a University in the county, of the University, and how many were to be co-opted members. The only limitation was that the number of military members must constitute at least half of the whole number of the association. In the first instance, the military members would probably be appointed by the Army Council, and possibly the scheme might provide for the officers of the Territorial Forces being given some voice in the appointment of the military members in the future. The representative members under the Bill would be appointed by the Army Council, but the councils and other bodies to be represented must be consulted before the appointment was made. Probably the scheme would provide for the representatives being members of the bodies or University to be represented by them. The co-opted members would, as the word implied, be appointed by the other members of the association, and the scheme would probably provide for a certain proportion of the co-opted members being representative of employers and labour associations. There was no limitation in the Bill as to the method of appointment of the chairman and vice-chairman of the associations. He had no doubt that in some cases the lord-lieutenant would also be chairman. The scheme could therefore provide for the appointment being made either by the Army Council or by the association, but probably it would be found expedient for the scheme itself to designate who the first chairman and vice-chairman were to be. Then the scheme would provide for the chairman or vice-chairman when presiding at a meeting of the association to have a casting vote and to be able to decide points of order. The Bill was silent as to whether or not the chairman or vice-chairman must be chosen from amongst the members of the association. It might conceivably be desirable in some counties to go outside the members of the association. The scheme could provide for either of these alternatives. The scheme would also deal with the term of office of members of the association, whether they should go out of office simultaneously, or whether a certain number were to retire in the year. The greater part of the business would be transacted through committees, the chairman and vice-chairman being *ex-officio* members of every committee. Provision was also made for the appointment of a secretary and other salaried officials of the association, the salary of the secretary coming out of the funds granted by the Army Council to the association. Probably the first secretary would be designated in the scheme, it being of importance that the Army Council should have some control over his appointment. It might be found possible, however, to provide for future appointments being made by the Army Council, after consultation, with the association. It would also probably be found necessary to provide that the secretary should not be removable except with the consent of the Army Council. The scheme would also provide for the accountability of the secretary. There was no power of surcharging the members of the association, and it might be found necessary for the Army Council to exercise a check over the finances of the association through the secretary. This might be done by requiring all cheques to be countersigned by the secretary and holding him responsible for any improper payments, and for that purpose requiring from him a fidelity guarantee. The scheme would further enable certain general officers, such as the general officer commanding the district, to attend the meetings of the association and to give their views on any subject under discussion, but without having the right to vote. Any general officer so authorised by the scheme to attend meetings of the association would, if unable to attend himself, be entitled to send another officer to represent him. In the case of very large and populous counties, such as

Lancashire, and the West Riding of Yorkshire, it might be found impossible for a single association to transact the whole of the business of the county, and the number of members on the association might be so large as to make the body unwieldy. In such cases a county might be divided into two or more parts, and a sub-association constituted for each part. The sub-association would probably consist solely of members of the central association, and their relations to the central association and to the other sub-associations would be regulated by the scheme. For instance, in matters of finance probably the scheme would provide for each sub-association sending in its estimates to the central association, which would consider and possibly modify them before sending them in to the Army Council as the estimates for the whole county. It was not intended to make use of the power of dividing counties except in very exceptional cases and circumstances, and it was not contemplated splitting up a county into districts corresponding to the present districts of the Volunteers. He added by way of explanation that it was the intention that the County Associations should be established after consultation with the lord-lieutenant. The noble Lord concluded by moving an Amendment by inserting in the first clause, after "other than the Regulars," the words "and their Reserves," with the object of making it clear that the Reserve Forces would not come under the control of the County Associations. The Amendment would not prevent the associations exercising power with regard to the care of Reservists, of which special mention was made in the Bill, and which would be conferred upon them under Clause 2, Subsection (2).

Amendment moved—

"In page 1, line 8, after the word 'Regulars,' to insert the words 'and their Reserves.'"—(*The Earl of Portsmouth.*)

THE EARL OF MOUNT EDGCUMBE pointed out that the noble Earl had not answered his second Question referring to the powers and duties of the president, whoever the president might be. All reference to that matter was omitted from the Bill and also from the noble Earl's statement.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: Those points will be settled by the scheme when it is drawn up.

LORD BELPER rose to order and asked what the Question was that was before the House, and whether the powers and duties of the president had anything to do with the Amendment to insert the words "and their Reserves."

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND said they had been almost called to order by the noble Marquess the Leader of the House for doing what he would have thought was a regular thing, namely, discussing the whole of these matters on the Motion to go into Committee. They were told by the noble Marquess that the proper time to ask questions was when the Bill was in Committee, but now they had got into Committee it was complained of if they did not confine themselves strictly to the particular point. The scheme was utterly indefinite. The Bill was one of an entirely novel nature, and two-thirds of it had never been discussed in the House of Commons. Therefore, it was the duty of their Lordships to direct attention to these matters. They could not allow a Cabinet to pass Bills without any discussion whatever.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said that any discussion which had reference to the Amendment now before the Committee would be in order. When the subsequent clauses, in which the matters were mentioned upon which Questions had been asked, were reached, the particular points referred to could be dealt with. But he would put it to the noble Earl the Lord Chairman whether the Question now before the Committee was not the insertion of the words, "and their Reserves," and whether it was not necessary for that Amendment to be disposed of before other matters could be discussed.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (The Earl of ONSLOW) agreed that other opportunities would occur, in the course of the Committee Stage, for raising the various points referred to. At the same time he thought that the statement which the noble Earl the Under-Secretary had made would have been more appropriate on the Motion that the clause should stand part of the Bill.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND moved to insert words in Subsection 3 (*c*), to make it clear that the lord-lieutenant was to be the president of the association. The noble Duke asked for the ruling of the Committee with regard to the putting of questions. He said there was no reference to deputy lieutenants until long after the scheme had been passed. Where, then, was the opportunity of asking questions with regard to deputy lieutenants? The noble Earl the Lord Chairman had expressed the opinion that the statement of the noble Earl the Under-Secretary would have come better at the end of the clause; but then the clause would have been disposed of, and noble Lords would have had no chance of moulding Amendments according to the statement of the Under-Secretary. He ventured to think, that the course first adopted, of discussing the whole matter on the Motion to go into Committee, was the proper one, but the Government had deliberately declared that that was out of order. The Under-Secretary had purposely refrained from making the statement he had just made until they were in Committee. The Government had done all they could to prevent a general discussion, and the House was consequently in a difficult position. Noble Lords desired answers to many questions on the whole scheme before they could frame their Amendments. With regard to the Amendment standing in his name, he thought that the position of the lord-lieutenant was such that, until he had shown himself incompetent, he should have the opportunity of being the president of the association. Was the present the right moment to ask what the duties of the president were? The president need not be the chairman. Then what was to be his duty? He (the noble Duke) would confine himself to that question for the moment, but he had a great many more to ask.

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 1, after the words 'county or' to insert the words 'if he do not assent then.'"—(*The Duke of Northumberland.*)

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH pointed out that the lord-lieutenant might be either unfit or unable to undertake the duties of president, but he suggested that the object of the noble Duke might be met by making the subsection read, "for constituting the lieutenant of the county, or failing him, such other person as the Army Council may think fit, president of the association."

THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE said the point was quite plain. The Government wanted the Army Council to decide whether or not the lord-lieutenant was fit, but the noble Duke wanted the lord-lieutenant himself to say whether he was willing to be the president. Surely it was reasonable that the lord-lieutenant should be allowed this option, and that the matter should not be left to possibly the caprice of the Army Council.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH replied that the primary object was to have military efficiency, and it might be the case in some counties that the lord-lieutenant, by age or other reasons, was not fit for this work. The Government did not desire that it should be obligatory to appoint such a lord-lieutenant president of the association.

THE EARL OF MOUNT EDGCUMBE asked if it was permissible for him now to put his Question as to what the powers and duties of the president were to be, and by what authority they were to be defined.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said the powers and duties attaching to the position of president would be defined under the scheme. The president, if he was not chairman, would, he understood, be an honorary member of the association, and would always take the chair when he was present.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: Over the head of the chairman?

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: Certainly.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: Then, as I understand it, the duty of the president, as apart from that of the chairman, is that he shall take the chair whether the chairman is present or not?

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND thought the lord-lieutenant might be removed altogether from the office if he was not to be competent to take the chair.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: The noble Duke has misunderstood what I said. He would preside if he were present.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: My Lords, I must try and make this matter clear if I can. I think there has been some misapprehension. Of course, it is our object, so far as possible, to respect the great historical and personal position of the lord-lieutenant, but the Government do contemplate cases in which the lord-lieutenant, possibly from age, or from his never having had anything to do with military affairs in any capacity, which is conceivable, would not be the proper person to be the working chairman of the association. That is a position which I think the House will agree is a possible one. But if he were president he would take the chair at a meeting whoever else was there. There are a number of analogies in societies of all descriptions, where some distinguished person takes the chair on the rare occasions when he attends, the real work being done by a working chairman or vice-chairman. That is the position which it is contemplated under certain circumstances that a lord-lieutenant will hold. In constituting these associations you are placing new duties on the lord-lieutenant, and it is hoped that in future lords-lieutenant will be appointed with the view of their being working chairmen of these associations; but meanwhile there may be cases in which the lord-lieutenant is really unable to undertake those duties, even though he might be willing to do so. Therefore we desire to leave this loophole to the Army Council, and I hope the Committee will accept the words proposed as an alternative by my noble friend behind me.

THE EARL OF HAREWOOD asked whether, in the case of a county which had been divided, the lord-lieutenant, should he be president of the county association, would also be expected to preside over the sub-associations? This was a somewhat important question, and one which he would like to have cleared up before voting on the Amendment.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said that if the lord-lieutenant was president of the association he would also be president of the sub-associations, but he need not be chairman of all or any of the sub-associations unless he so desired.

THE EARL OF HAREWOOD: Then the sub-associations resolve themselves into committees of the large association?

LORD NEWTON said he was anxious to express a favourable opinion if he could with regard to this Bill. One of the lords-lieutenant whom he knew was a Quaker. It was obviously undesirable that a lord-lieutenant who was a Quaker should be placed at the head of a semi-military organisation, and therefore he thought the Government were exercising a wise discretion in maintaining the provision in the modified form of words suggested by Lord Portsmouth. With regard to the objection which was apparently entertained by the noble Earl on the cross benches, Lord Rosebery, to the president occupying the chair when he was present, he could only say that, so far as his experience went, this was done in other bodies. He happened to be president of a political association, and when he was present he was allowed to take the chair without protest, although the chairman might himself be there. It was a perfectly natural thing under the circumstances, and he was happy to think that on this point he could support His Majesty's Government.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: The noble Lord is mistaken as to my object. It was not objection or criticism, but elucidation.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My Lords, I do not think we are very far apart on this point. I gather that there will be, in the view of the Government, two kinds of presidents. There is, in the first place, the lord-lieutenant who will be what you might call a real working president. In the second place, there is the lord-lieutenant who will hold the office in a more or less honorary capacity, with a chairman, who has been described in another place as a man of business, to carry on the bulk of the work. What I would rather like to elicit is whether it is the intention of His Majesty's Government to give a lord-lieutenant at any rate the refusal of the honorary presidency, or whether they desire to preserve to themselves the right of refusing even an honorary presidency in certain cases.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Earl of ELGIN) said it was the intention of the Bill that the lord-lieutenant should be appointed in all cases in which that would be at all practicable, the only reason for putting in the reservation being that there might be cases in which it was inexpedient or inconvenient for the lord-lieutenant to act. Obviously, if that were so the decision must rest with somebody, and His Majesty's Government thought that, on the whole, this being a scheme for military defence, it was better to put upon the Army Council the responsibility of giving or withholding approval.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I venture to hope that after what has been said, my noble friend behind me will not press his Amendment.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND said he would withdraw the Amendment he had moved and substitute the words suggested by the noble Earl the Under-Secretary of State for War.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 1, after the word 'or,' to insert the words 'failing him.'"—(*The Duke of Northumberland.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

*LORD ZOUCHE OF HARYNGWORTH moved to leave out "one-half" and to insert "two-thirds," his object being to ensure that the military element in the proposed County Associations should prevail. He thought this highly desirable, inasmuch as the functions of the associations were almost entirely of a military nature. They would have to do with the administration of a large section of the armed forces of the Crown, and the expression in the Bill that the officers representative of all arms and branches of the Territorial Forces should be not less than one-half of the whole number of the association would rather seem to indicate that the Government had some idea of this sort in their mind when they framed the section. But it rather depended on the exact meaning of the expression "one-half" and how it was to be worked. In the event of unavoidable absence the one-half might be in a minority in a vote on some important question. It was desirable to make it perfectly clear that the military element should as far as possible prevail for another reason—namely, to prevent any risk in the future of political intrigue or difficulty of that sort in the County Associations. He did not attach any particular virtue or magic to the exact fraction which he moved, and if the Government would introduce words to ensure that as far as possible, the military members were not in a minority, his object would be gained.

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 7, to leave out 'one-half,' and to insert 'two-thirds.'"—(*Lord Zouche of Haryngworth.*)

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said the civil and military elements on the association had been very carefuly worked out, and the proviso now in the Bill, that at least one-half should be military representatives, appeared to them thoroughly to safeguard the interests of units from their own especial point of view, and to give them adequate representation. He would direct their Lordships' attention to the subsequent Subsections (*e*) and (*f*)—

"(*e*) For the appointment by the Army Council, where it appears desirable, and after consultation with the authorities to be represented, of representatives of county and county borough councils and Universities wholly or partly within the county.

"(*f*) For the appointment of such number of co-opted members as the scheme may prescribe, including, if thought desirable, representatives of the interests of employers and workmen."

It was of the utmost importance that the association should embrace the various interests of the county and be thoroughly representative. If the Amendment which the noble Lord had just moved were accepted by the Government the effect would be that interests would in many cases be shut out which ought to be represented if the associations were to be really successful. If it did not have that effect, it would make the association unnecessarily unwieldy, and to secure the necessary number of officers of the territorial units would necessitate bringing on to the association a number of comparatively junior officers. The Government were quite at one with the noble Lord as to the importance of securing that the military opinion should prevail.

LORD RAGLAN: Am I right in thinking that the first military representative on the association will be appointed by the Army Council?

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: Yes.

LORD RAGLAN further asked whether this gentleman would have the right of refusing to sit on the association. He could not imagine that it would be much encouragement to officers to join the Territorial Forces if they were told that they were liable to be put on these associations, which might involve the compulsory display of considerable private benevolence on their part. It would be interesting to know whether they would have the right to refuse to serve.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: My noble friend need not be alarmed on that point. It will be purely voluntary.

LORD RAGLAN: Then what will happen if the inducements are so few that no persons will go on the associations?

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: We do not anticipate such an unsatisfactory state of things.

LORD HARRIS inquired if it was contemplated to give any protection to minorities on the associations. He took it that of the military half of the association a very large proportion would be Volunteer commanding officers. He imagined that the idea would be to put on a representative of as many corps as existed in the county. The Yeomanry were in a considerable minority, and as the funds were to be distributed by a vote of the association he would like to know what protection the Yeomanry had. Were the Government going to take care that some protection was given to that arm, the representatives of which would be largely outnumbered in voting power?

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said this was a matter which had been in the mind of the Government, and they would do their best under any scheme to protect legitimate minority interests.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: The Amendment before the Committee is that of my noble friend behind me, to increase the military element from one-half to two-thirds. I rather hope he will not press this Amendment upon the Committee, and for this reason. We all desire that these County Associations should be made as popular as possible, and we have heard things to-night which have made it clear that we cannot afford to do anything which might diminish that popularity. I cannot help thinking that if they are given a too military complexion public confidence in them will be abated, because, as we all know, there is a great deal of suspicion in the country against anything like militarising tendencies. I am afraid that if as many as two-thirds of the members were to be soldiers we should find that representatives of trade unions, municipal bodies, and Universities, particularly when they knew that their appointment entailed liabilities which might be of an onerous character, would fight shy of taking that part which we all desire they should take in these associations.

*LORD ZOUCHE OF HARYNGWORTH intimated that after what had been said he would not press his Amendment to a division. His only object in moving it had been to secure that care should be taken by the Army Council that the military element should always be in a position to be able to assert its views without running the risk of being swamped by people who had not had technical experience.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

LORD BELPER moved an Amendment to secure that schemes for the appointment by the Army Council of representatives of county and county borough councils and Universities should provide that the appointment should be made not only "after consultation with," but "on the nomination of" the authorities to be represented. He said the Secretary of State had had an interview on this subject with a deputation of the County Councils Association, who thought that these representatives should be real representatives, nominated or suggested in some way by the councils themselves. As the Bill stood, the representatives appointed might not be the best ones. He very much doubted whether the word "representative" interpreted in an Act of Parliament necessarily meant a representative selected by the county or borough council themselves for the purpose of being put on this association. That being the case, it was surely better not to use words which might give rise to misconception when they came to be interpreted. On the other hand, the words in his Amendment were recognised by Parliament as meaning exactly the same as was meant in this clause. It would be remembered that considerable discussion took place upon this particular point in the clauses which dealt with the schemes under the Education Act of 1902. In that case the county council wished to get representatives from certain learned bodies, but desired to keep the appointment of those gentlemen in their own hands; and the words that were used in that Act were that the scheme—

> "Shall provide for the appointment by the council, on the nomination or recommendation, where it appears desirable, of the bodies," etc.

The result was that the county council asked the University, for instance, to suggest to them gentlemen whom they thought it would be desirable to appoint, but the county council retained the appointment in their own hands; and if one of the persons nominated failed, and the other was not one that the county council thought would be a desirable member, they could again approach the University and ask that other names should be suggested. That was, he understood, exactly the process which it was proposed to adopt in this case. The noble Earl the Under-Secretary had stated that "probably" members of the county council would be the representatives placed on the associations. He hoped that the noble Earl meant "certainly," because he did not think it would be at all desirable that somebody outside the county council, and not on the nomination of the county council, should be selected as a representative of the county council. However, that might be, if the intention of the clause was to allow the county councils to suggest names and to give the Army Council the absolute power of appointment, it would be far better to use words which had been recognised by Parliament before, the meaning of which was well known, and which would not give rise to any question hereafter.

Amendment moved—

> "In page 2, line 10, after the word 'with,' to insert the words 'and on the nomination of.'"—(*Lord Belper.*)

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said he could not accept the Amendment in the form in which it was moved. The fact that the councils must be consulted was proof that due regard would be paid to the representations of the county councils. At the same time the Army Council would, at first, best understand the qualifications that were necessary, and they would look to the local authority to help them to obtain the persons possessing those qualifications. It was in deference to the representations of the deputation from the County Councils Association, referred to by Lord Belper, that the clause was amended in the shape in which it now stood. He would accept the words "and on the recommendation of," if that would meet the noble Lord.

LORD BELPER said that if the Government approached county councils with an idea that they were suspicious of them it would not tend to make matters run smoothly. But county councils would co-operate very warmly if it were shown that there would be confidence in their recommendation. He would accept the word "recommendation" now, with the opportunity of reconsidering the point on Report, if necessary.

On Question, Amendment, as amended, agreed to.

*LORD HAVERSHAM moved to amend Subsection (*g*) so as to provide that the chairman and vice-chairman should be elected by the County Association and not appointed by the Army Council. He saw no reason why the practice followed in every other local authority, from county council to parish council, should not be adopted in the case of these County Associations. The selection of chairman was a very essential point in the good conduct of the meetings, and it was desirable that the best business men in the counties should preside over these associations. How, he asked, were the officials at the War Office to know who would make the best chairman in a distant county? He ventured to think there was likely to be considerable friction between the County Associations and the Army Council on the question of these appointments, and whenever there was a failure it would be laid to the account of the appointed chairman.

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 18, to leave out the word 'appoint' and to insert the word 'election.'"—(*Lord Haversham.*)

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said the Army Council felt that it was very important to get an efficient and effective chairman to start the scheme, and they would, therefore, like to reserve the appointment of the first chairman. But he was quite prepared to bring up on Report words which would secure that, apart from the first chairman, the election should be with the association.

THE EARL OF MOUNT-EDGCUMBE asked whether it was to be an annual or permanent appointment.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said he thought the idea was that it would be from year to year. That point would be dealt with in the scheme.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND asked who would willingly accept the position of chairman when he was to be displaced on occasions by a president chosen by somebody else than the association, with a secretary, chosen by somebody else, who might thwart him at every turn, and with a vice-chairman, who was to be his right-hand man, selected not by the body over whom the chairman was to preside, but by the Army Council.

LORD LUCAS did not think the appointment of the chairman by the Army Council would be arbitrary. It was hoped that in most cases where the lord-lieutenant would accept the position, he would himself act, and the appointment of chairman would only arise where the lord-lieutenant accepted the presidency, but did not take the chairmanship. The reservation of the appointment of the first chairman would prevent the possible tendency to appoint someone more for his social qualifications and power in the county than for his actual capacity to act in that position. As regarded the position of the president, surely the noble Duke would not expect that when the lord-lieutenant of the county attended a meeting he should take a subordinate position to his own chairman. It was the obvious corollary to the requirement that the lord-lieutenant should in every possible case be president, that he should be allowed to attend as often as he could, and, when he did attend, should take the chair.

LORD METHUEN thought everything must depend on whether the appointment was for a year or for life.

LORD NEWTON asked what language would have been used by noble Lords opposite, supposing this Bill had been brought in by an effete Conservative administration, and they had proposed that the Army Council should dictate to these associations as to who was to be their chairman? What became of all the talk about trusting the people? The Government dared not trust their own associations. The only consistent person on the Ministerial side of the House was the noble Lord who had moved this Amendment, and he hoped he would be consistent enough to take a division.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND wished to know why these associations should be thought to be more unfit to choose their chairman than every parish and district council in the country.

LORD MONKSWELL said that, as the Government had proposed a compromise, it really was important to know whether the first chairman was to hold office for a year or for life.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: All I said was that he would probably hold office for a year. He will certainly not hold office for life.

LORD MONTAGU OF BEAULIEU said that on that point hung the whole question. He hoped the Committee would have more information before they divided.

*LORD HAVERSHAM thought that in view of the compromise suggested by the noble Earl the Under-Secretary—that after the first appointment the selection should rest in the hands of the association—noble Lords opposite would agree to the withdrawal of the Amendment.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I do not think my noble friend has quite gauged the feeling of this side of the House. We are anxious that these County Associations should start with all the circumstances in their favour, and many of us are under the impression that the circumstances will be much more favourable to them if at the very outset there is not imposed upon them by the Army Council a chairman who may not be in their opinion the most suitable person for the post. Therefore, I for one, should vote for the Amendment of the noble Lord, particularly as we have been unable to elicit from the noble Earl in charge of the Bill particulars as to the length of the term of service which is to be assigned to these chairmen. The position is not to be held for life, but it may be held for a considerable number of years, and that predisposes me in favour of the noble Lord's Amendment.

THE EARL OF ELGIN said his noble friend had stated that this might be an annual appointment or for a term of years. If it was not an annual appointment, he should say it would be an appointment for three years or something of that kind. The Government were anxious to start these associations as soon as possible, and they were of opinion that it would facilitate their working, in the first instance, if the Army Council put the first chairmen in the schemes. He could not help thinking that the arrangement explained by his noble friend by which on the first occasion the appointment of chairman would be made by the Army Council, and on subsequent occasions the association would have the right of electing him, would be the most convenient.

THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE suggested as a compromise that the Army Council should nominate the chairman for a term not exceeding three years.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said this suggestion did not seem to be on the face of it at all an unreasonable one, and he would consider the matter before the Report stage and bring up words then.

LORD HAVERSHAM was afraid he would be compelled to take a vote after what had been said by the noble Marquess the Leader of the Opposition.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Consequential Amendment agreed to.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND moved an Amendment to provide that the appointment of the secretary and other officers should be made by the association. He asked whether he correctly understood the Under-Secretary to say that the salary of the secretary of the association would be paid by the Government. Was it to be outside the £75 per company, or to be included in that amount, and did it also apply to the staff? He did not think that the Army Council were the best body to select the person who was to act as secretary to the association. The main complaint which county councils had at the present moment against Standing Joint Committees was that those committees selected their own clerk and not the county council. They would have the same feeling with regard to these associations, who would naturally desire to elect their own staffs. He hoped the Government would accept the Amendment.

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 24, after the word 'appointment' to insert the words 'by the association.'" —(*The Duke of Northumberland.*)

LORD RAGLAN gathered that the Secretary was to be appointed by the Army Council, to be paid by the Army Council, and not to be dismissed without the consent of the Army Council. Therefore he would be the servant, not of the association, but of the Army Council. Was that correct?

*LORD BLYTHSWOOD said he believed he heard from the other side that the secretary was also to look after the pay and finances of the association. He would like to know, if that was to be the case, whether the secretary was to be responsible for the accounts to the association, to the War Office, or to the Army Council.

*EARL FORTESCUE said that whoever was responsible for the finances of the association would be accountable to the War Office, on whom the loss would fall if a secretary should bolt. Would the War Office still be responsible for his conduct if the appointment were made by the association?

LORD MONKSWELL suggested that the noble Earl might tell the House what other officers were to be appointed.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said he could not acept the Amendment. It was quite true that if the Army Council appointed the secretary, the War Office would be responsible if, to use the noble Earl's phrase, he bolted with the money. As to the other officers, they had not specified them in the Bill, because they did not know what other officers might be required. He contended it was essential for the Army Council to retain the appointment of the secretary in its own hands. He was to be the chief medium of communication between the association and the Army Council on matters of administration on the one hand, and between the general commanding and the association on matters of training on the other. It was, therefore, of the greatest importance that he should be a man with knowledge of military procedure as well as of business capacity, and his choice would require a great deal of care.

LORD AMPTHILL suggested that the appointment of a secretary and other officers of the association should be made "subject to the approval of the Army Council."

LORD RIBBLESDALE asked who would pay for the undetermined number of officers. Were they to be paid by the County Associations?

LORD SALTOUN asked whether the secretary was to be a military officer, a non-commissioned officer, or a civilian.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND: said his question—namely, whether the pay of the secretary would be outside the £75—had not been answered.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: I cannot exactly answer off-hand the question put by Lord Saltoun, but the secretary may, and probably will, be a retired military officer.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND: Is the pay of the secretary to come out of the £75 per company?

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: Yes.

*LORD BLYTHSWOOD asked whether the secretary would be accountable to the Army Council for the money that passed through his hands. The £75 per company would not pay for the clerks; it would not pay for anything. The members of the County Associations were apparently to be responsible for all the money necessary over the £75 per company. He ventured to think the Government would not get a single person to join the associations with such a responsibility as that.

THE DUKE OF RUTLAND inquired what was meant by the "accountability" of the officers. Whom were they to account to, and what were they to be responsible for? What, in fact, was the meaning of the phrase?

LORD RIBBLESDALE said he would like an answer to his question regarding the pay for the undetermined number of officers.

VISCOUNT MIDLETON urged the Government to accept the suggestion of Lord Ampthill, for the appointment of the officers by the association would meet the difficulty. It was obvious that for the War Office to appoint all the officers of an association administered by a number of gentlemen who would have very heavy responsibility would place them in a most unusual position. He thought that if the noble Earl in charge of the Bill could see his way to allow the associations to appoint their own officers with the approval of the War Office the difficulty might be met.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH suggested that the noble Duke's Amendment should be withdrawn for the present. Between now and the Report stage he would consider whether he could accept the Amendment.

VISCOUNT ESHER suggested that, in lieu of Lord Ampthill's words, Paragraph (*i*) should be amended on the lines of Paragraph (*e*) and should read—

"(*i*) For the appointment of a secretary and other officers of the association, on the recommendation of the association."

LORD AMPTHILL: It is not the same thing.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said he would not object to the words if put in the way suggested by the noble Viscount.

LORD AMPTHILL expressed the hope that the noble Earl in charge of the Bill would accept the noble Duke's Amendment, with the words "subject to the approval of the Army Council" added, on the understanding that the wording might be modified on Report if thought necessary, after further consideration.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: I accept the Amendment on that understanding.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND said that, having withdrawn his Amendment as on the Paper, he now moved it in the form in which the noble Earl the Under-Secretary had agreed to accept it.

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 24, after the word 'appointment,' to insert the words 'by the association, subject to the approval of the Army Council.'"—(*The Duke of Northumberland.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

LORD MONTAGU OF BEAULIEU explained that the object of the next Amendment on the Paper in his name was to elicit information from the Under-Secretary as to what was meant by the term "sub-association."

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 42, after the word 'another,' to insert the words 'and providing each sub-association shall comprise an area not less than now allocated to a volunteer regiment.'"—(*Lord Montagu of Beaulieu.*)

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH did not think the Amendment really necessary. The county would be the usual area for each association, and only where the population or the exceptional nature of an area rendered administration by a single association difficult would it be necessary to sub-divide a county. He referred to such counties as Lancashire, the West Riding, and, possibly, London. Such sub-associations would, therefore, obviously administer an area which would have no relation to that now identified with Volunteer regiments.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

LORD LOVAT said he brought forward the Amendment standing in his name in order to ascertain how far it was intended to proceed with the idea of the division as the military unit. If this scheme was to be a success it must have some driving power, and it would be readily admitted that in a great number of counties the driving power could only be secured where there was interest behind it. In grouping such a number of counties together as would produce a division they gave some tangible object at which to aim. He did not see how any county could be interested in producing a portion of a regiment, and when the time of training arrived to lose sight of that unit because it went to train in another county. He suggested that some such paragraph as he had placed on the Paper should be introduced in order definitely to point out that the division was the thing which was aimed at. In many counties there would be difficulty in running the associations because the £75 per company would not more than pay the secretary and other officers, but if power were given of grouping counties together considerable keenness would be excited.

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 42, after the word 'another,' to insert the following new paragraph: '(*m*) For the grouping of County Associations into divisional associations in the case where the size of counties, numbers of population, or distribution of Territorial Army units makes such grouping desirable.'"—(*Lord Lovat.*)

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said the Government considered that it would be better to deal with this matter under Clause 4, Subsection 1, Paragraph (*e*), which gave ample power for any such joint action as was necessary in these cases. He could not accept the Amendment as it now stood, because it would interfere with the structure of the Bill. The county must be retained as the unit.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I hope the Amendment proposed by my noble friend will be considered. It seems eminently reasonable, and it does not touch quite the same point as Paragraph (*e*) of the first subsection in Clause 4. That subsection has to do with the co-operation of two separate associations already formed, but what my noble friend proposes is that just as in Paragraph (*l*) you are allowed to divide a county owing to its unwieldy size, so where you have two very small counties, and where for other reasons of practical convenience it is desirable to group the two, they should be so grouped. The proposal seems to be logical and symmetrical, and I hope it will not be put entirely on one side.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: We should be anxious, as far as possible, to meet the cases mentioned by the noble Lord opposite, but there is just this more in reply to what fell from the noble Marquess. The object of the introduction of the lord-lieutenant and of the other provisions is that these associations should be of a county character. The object of the noble Lord, I think, is rather to substitute a regular military organisation for the county character. It is quite possible that the noble Lord might be able to suggest something when we come to Paragraph (*e*) of Subsection 1 of Clause 4 which would rather stiffen that provision, but we do not want to make it appear that the area should be a military one and not a county one, which would be somewhat the effect of the introduction of the paragraph moved by the noble Lord.

LORD CLIFFORD OF CHUDLEIGH pointed out that, however useful the power of grouping various associations might be, the Amendment as it stood only allowed this to be done for the purpose of forming a divisional association. He thought the question whether a division was a good unit under which to group an association was one which admitted of a good deal of argument, and he would much prefer the Amendment if the word "divisional" were omitted.

LORD LOVAT said he was quite prepared to take up the matter, as had been suggested, on Clause 4.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND moved an Amendment to add, at the end of Subsection 5, words providing that the scheme required by the Act should be laid on the Table of both Houses of Parliament, and that if an

Address were presented to His Majesty by either House within the period named praying that any such scheme might be annulled, such scheme should be annulled and should forthwith become void and of no effect, but without prejudice to the validity of any proceedings which might have been undertaken in the meantime. This Amendment was not on the Paper, but he believed it carried out the intention of the Government as stated by the noble Earl.

Amendment moved—

"In page 3, line 9, after the word 'scheme,' to insert the words: 'Every scheme required by this Act to be laid before each House of Parliament shall be so laid within forty days next after it is made, if Parliament is then sitting, or if not, within forty days after the commencement of the then next ensuing session; and, if an address is presented to His Majesty by either House of Parliament within the next subsequent forty days on which the said House shall have sat, praying that any such scheme may be annulled, such scheme shall be so annulled and shall thenceforth become void and of no effect, but without prejudice to the validity of any proceedings which may in the meantime have been taken under the same.'"—(*The Duke of Northumberland.*)

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said the Government were prepared to accept, in principle, the proposal of the noble Duke, but they could not accept his words. He asked that he might be allowed to bring up an amended form of words on Report.

VISCOUNT MIDLETON said he could produce a very long list of precedents for this Amendment. In one case it was laid down that it was necessary for a Minister in either House of Parliament to move a Vote bringing the Order in Council or the scheme into effect. The provision proposed by the noble Duke was a much less stringent one—it was merely that the scheme should lie for forty days on the Table, and that if during that period any Amendment were made to it by an Address to His Majesty the scheme should be annulled, and no doubt a further scheme would then be put forward. It would save a great deal of debate on these questions if they knew that not merely the scheme would be laid but provision would be made to enable Parliament to pronounce against it in the, he hoped unlikely, contingency of that being required. The matters discussed under this clause were all important for the success of the scheme, and in dealing with the rest of the Bill it might greatly facilitate progress if it was felt that in each case Parliament would have an opportunity, not of recasting every scheme, but, in an exceptional case, of taking action.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD moved an Amendment to strike out the Militia from Clause 1, Subsection 6, this, he said, being consequential on Clause 29 of the Bill, the effect of which clause was to transfer the Militia not to the Territorial Force, but to the Regular Army. If their Lordships would turn to Clause 29 of the Bill they would see that no mention was made of the Militia. The word did not occur in the clause, yet the result of that clause was to repeal the Militia Act of 1882, and to abolish the whole system and principle of Militia service. Under Clause 29 men might in future be enlisted directly into the Army Reserve, without having previously served with the colours in any branch of the Regular Army. Men so enlisted would be known as Special Reservists in distinction from Regular Reservists. The proposal was to ask all Militiamen now serving to enlist into the Special Reserve under this clause. Militiamen who did not transfer to the Special Reserve were to serve under the Militia Act of 1882 until time expired. When there were no longer any men serving under the Militia Act of 1882, that Act would become obsolete and would be repealed by a Statute Law Revision Act. There were at present about 90,000 Militiamen serving. Now all of those 90,000 men were Militiamen because they did not wish to be Regular soldiers. They were now going to ask those men to change their minds and transfer from Militia to Army service. The conditions of service to which the Militia were now asked to agree were the same as those which were discussed at a conference held last July between fourteen Militia commanding officers and the representatives of the War Office. Those fourteen commanding officers, representing engineers, artillery, and infantry, came from all parts of the United Kingdom, and were unanimously of opinion that if the conditions now proposed were enforced it would not be possible to enlist the Militia for foreign service. They had the advantage of being able to base their opinion on actual experience. At the moment when the South African War occurred, there existed in the Militia a form of enlistment known as the Militia Reserve. It was a complicated form of enlistment under which men took a new oath and accepted foreign service in the Reserve of the Regular Army and received a sovereign a year. It was then enacted by the Reserve Forces Act that when Militiamen so enlisted were called out for foreign service with the Line they became for all intents and purposes soldiers of the Regular Forces, as they would do now under Clause 29, and were liable to be transferred to any corps. This form of enlistment was accepted by the men in a gambling spirit. Many won in the sense that they got their sovereign a year for many years, completed their term of service in the Militia, and were never sent to the Regular Army. Many were hard hit by the South African War when the Militia Reserve was sent to the Regular Army and drafted in all directions. The men intensely disliked being sent away from their regiments and friends. The noble Lord, Lord Castletown, dwelt on this point in his speech on the Second Reading of the Bill. But there were many other reasons connected with the campaign which made this form of service most unpopular. He would quote from what Militia Reservists had told him happened in South Africa. First, the Militia non-commissioned officers had to give up their stripes and serve as privates, which meant, amongst other things, a great loss of pay—some £50 or £60—whereas the Volunteer non-commissioned officers retained their rank. Secondly, they saw the Volunteers and Yeomanry, who had agreed to serve as long as the war lasted, going home before its termination, whereas they were retained. To make it worse, they were kept twelve months after their Militia engagement had expired. Thirdly, when the Militia Reserve men belonging to a Militia battalion joined the regimental mounted infantry of the territorial regiment they received pay at the rate of 1s. 5d. per diem, whereas the Yeomanry received from 5s. to 7s. per diem. In their own words, they were required to do the same work at a much lower rate of wages. If they had not belonged to the Militia at all, and had volunteered for service, they would have got 5s. per diem. But because they had trained with the Militia they were precluded from earning the higher rate of pay which they saw given to men—he was referring to the later contingents who went out—whose quality they despised, because to their knowledge they had never given an hour to military training before their arrival in South Africa. The lesson they learnt on this point by experience was this. If there was a war they would have no trouble in going out if they wanted to, without doing anything so foolish as to tie their hands before the war came; they could make their own bargain with the State when the war had come, and then they would be able to make their own terms. There was a good deal of sense in that. Finally, they considered that they could not be compensated for the losses they had incurred under a bounty of £50 and a good start in civil life. They could not look forward to any pension as a Regular soldier could do. This touched on the most important point of all. Militia Reserve men came back after being several years in Africa; they were at once discharged from the ranks of the Army into those of the unemployed; they had lost touch with their old employers and with civilian labour, and that spelt in many cases ruin for themselves and their families. They considered themselves not only hardly but unfairly treated, because they never really understood what the Militia Reserve form of enlistment meant. But they did now. Militia commanding officers had another experiment of foreign service enlistment for the Militia to guide them in forming their opinion. In 1898 an attempt was made to enlist a special service section in the Militia for foreign service. The bounties offered were higher than those offered for the Militia Reserve. It was an annual bounty of £2, and £5 on return from Army service. He remembered that some Militia regiments expected that all their men would take these terms and that the whole battalion would be enlisted and registered as a foreign-service battalion. As a matter of fact, the men—and this was before the South African War—would not touch that form of service, and the whole proposal dropped. Those, then, were the facts upon which commanding officers based the advice they tendered to His Majesty's Government. A long period of peace had made the form of Militia Reserve service possible. The experience of the South African War had, in the opinion of Militia officers, made it impossible. But the Government were of a contrary opinion, and had decided to try and enforce these conditions of foreign service enlistment on the following terms. The Government proposed to offer the men a bounty of £2 to transfer in the first instance, to be refunded—this was important—if the man joined the Army within a year. He knew well the use and value of bounties, but he hated the system, because it meant that they went to a man—a poor man—with money in their hand, and bribed him into taking conditions from which he would otherwise keep free. He gathered from answers given by the noble Earl the Under-Secretary of State for War last week that the men after transfer would receive 10s. a year less bounty than at present. The noble Earl was not able to say if the Special Reservist would take away as his own property the same articles of clothing after training as the Militiaman now did. The Government, therefore, offered less pay for a far more dangerous and exacting form of service, and one of a kind which might be the man's ruin in civil life. The reason for this extraordinary proposal no doubt was the fact that if they raised the pay of the Special Reserve beyond a certain point they would shut down all recruiting for the Regular Army, because it would pay men much better to enlist in the Special Reserve rather than in the Army. Another point, and it was a most important one, upon which he was not able to get any information from the noble Earl, was the sum of money which would be required from a man to purchase his discharge from the Special Reserve. An Army Reservist was required to pay from £25 to £18, which was, of course, prohibitive. A Militiaman could buy his discharge for £1. This was the difficulty. If they let men purchase out of the Reserve for £1, men would be constantly buying their discharge, and they would never know how strong the Reserve was. If there was a war scare men might purchase their discharges early and freely. The act of stopping purchases was an act of mobilisation which a Government would be slow to adopt. On the other hand, if they made it very hard for men to buy their discharge from this Special Reserve, they would hesitate about going into it. Young unmarried men would join this Special Reserve, but when they wanted to marry they would desire to buy their discharge. Certainly every Militia commanding officer must explain to the men, not only the terms on which they undertook, but also those on which they could get free from, this serious liability. He was quite sure that His Majesty's Government did not desire that the men should be in any way trapped into the transfer. It would be an easy matter to explain the new conditions of service to the men now serving. They were precisely the same as those of the old Militia Reserve. All they had to do in order to act perfectly fairly by the men—and he would certainly follow this plan himself, was to say—

> "These new conditions of service are precisely the same as those of the old Militia Reserve. I advise you to go to the men who served in the Militia Reserve in South Africa and talk the matter over with them. They can tell you about this very much better than I can, because they have had recent and actual experience of this service abroad. Talk the matter over with them and then come back and tell me what you have decided to do."

There was an old proverb that "A scalded cat is afraid of hot water," and that was not inapplicable to the men who had served in the Militia Reserve in South Africa. He thought they were certain of a transfer of upwards of 15,000 boys. That was about the annual transfer from the Militia to the Army; but all they were doing amounted to paying these boys £2 a head to keep out of the Army for a year. What he was most anxious to know was how were the Government, after having abolished the Militia, going to get the 12,000 recruits per year which that force supplied to the Army, and at the same time build up a reserve of 70,000 men—men of over twenty for foreign service, because a boy reserve for a foreign-service Army was useless? If the Government had not a certain solution for that puzzle, then their scheme must fail. He would regret to see this scheme wrecked at the outset, and he therefore ventured to make this suggestion to His Majesty's Government. There must be a lengthy period of transition whilst they passed from the old order to the new. It would be a period of great military weakness. Let them leave the Militia as a force in being during that period under the Militia Act of 1882. What the Militia thought they could do to help during that transitional period was this. Let them enlist the whole Militia for foreign service, but not seek to deprive the men of their immunity from drafting which they had always enjoyed by Act of Parliament, and to which they attached special importance. That in itself was an immense step in advance. Then he believed all Militia officers would do their best to find some solution for the difficulty of individual drafting to the Line in time of war. In his opinion they could only arrive at a satisfactory solution by first accustoming the men to foreign-service enlistment under a form congenial to them, and then consulting the men themselves, for under voluntary enlistment they were the judges. It was no use to tell the Militiaman that he must accept drafting to the Line, because they could not make him do so. If the Government were not disposed to follow such a plan, then they must be prepared to face a breakdown in the voluntary system of recruiting for the Regular Army.

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 12, to leave out the word 'Militia.'"—(*The Duke of Bedford.*)

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said he should be glad to accept the Amendment. He did not for one moment complain that the noble Duke had touched upon the question of the Militia generally, and at a later stage, on an Amendment which would be proposed by the noble Marquess, Lord Salisbury, to Clause 28, he proposed to explain why the Government were unable to accept the Amendment in the form proposed by the noble Marquess, and he would at the same time make a general statement respecting the views of the Government on the question of the Militia.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY urged the noble Earl to make the statement which he had foreshadowed on the Amendment now before the Committee, which raised the whole question of the Militia. It was idle to suppose that the men composing the Militia would be induced to transfer to the Special Reserve if they were to be financially worse off after the transfer than they were before. The £4 10s. bounty to which the Militiamen were now entitled would go on being paid, even if the Bill passed into law as it stood, and therefore the Militiaman when asked to transfer would reply that he would enjoy £4 10s. until the end of his engagement, and did not intend to transfer when he would only then be entitled to £4. Unless at least as good terms were offered after the Militiaman had transferred he would continue to receive the £4 10s. and to pursue his civil avocation. That was a very unwise policy, and he did not think the Government would persist in it. Then there was the question of the Militiaman buying his discharge. It had always been considered one of the great inducements to a recruit to enlist in the Militia that it was possible for him by a reasonable payment to escape from the obligation which he had undertaken. He had been told by very experienced Militia officers that they really did not believe Militiamen would enlist in the numbers they did but for that provision. It therefore became very important in starting this new scheme that the Militia should know exactly upon what terms they would be able to buy their discharge. The criticisms he had offered were not submitted in any hostile sense, but unless very reasonable terms could be arrived at on this point he despaired of the success of the policy of the Government. Unless it could be shown to the Militiaman that he was not bound for the whole term without any possible means of getting out of his obligation by reasonable payment, he was convinced that recruiting for the Militia would fall off very considerably. He hoped the noble Earl the Under-Secretary would see his way to make on this Amendment the general statement on the question of the Militia which he had foreshadowed.

LORD RAGLAN said that the bounty which the Government were going to give was not £4 a year for a far larger liability than at present, but only £3, because the men would not get the training bounty. The Government and the Secretary of State for War had not hesitated to break faith with the men when it happened to be convenient. Never in the history of the British Army had that fact been so nakedly pushed home as under this Bill. He looked with the greatest fear upon these proposals and to the number of years which it would take to efface from the minds of the men the gross manner in which faith had been broken both with soldiers and with Militiamen under this Bill. He wished to emphasise what had fallen from the noble Marquess with regard to the purchase of discharges. He was fully persuaded that nothing more conduced to the enlistment of a good class of men than the knowledge that it was possible for them to get out of the obligations in an easy manner. In the case of a bad man it did not matter, for he deserted; but, in the case of a good man, if the sum he would have to pay was not within reasonable reach enlistment would be discouraged. If the Government could see their way to leave the Militia out of the Bill for a year or two until they saw how the Territorial Army would work they would do a very wise thing for the country.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said that his only desire was to consult the convenience of their Lordships, and if it would clear the air he was prepared to make his general statement now. He hoped that by making a statement now it might to a certain extent obviate the necessity of discussing some points later on.

VISCOUNT MIDLETON: We cannot promise that.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said that any statement that he might make in respect of the Militia was a statement which had been very carefully considered and very carefully drawn up in consultation with all the military authorities. It was a matter in which necessarily a great deal of very technical language had to be used, and what he felt with regard to any statement he might make was that what their Lordships would expect—and what they no doubt had a right to expect—would be that it should be a statement which would shew that His Majesty's Government were really anxious to meet the view of noble Lords who were interested in the Militia, and to meet that view not merely in the letter but in the spirit. There were many things which could not be put into the Bill, but their Lordships were entitled to have a statement as serious and as plain as possible, as from one gentleman to another, which would shew that it was the intention of His Majesty's Government to meet as far as possible—and he thought in many ways they could meet—the wishes of noble Lords on the other side of the House in regard to the Militia. His Majesty's Government were anxious to do everything they could to meet the wishes of the Militia, and with that end in view they had put down an Amendment to Clause 29, page 22, line 10, the effect of which would be—as His Majesty's Government believed and intended—that all Militiamen serving as special reservists would be returned to civil employment simultaneously on an order for the disembodiment of the Militia, and not piecemeal, as was the custom with respect to ordinary reservists. His Majesty's Government would also undertake that as far as practicable—subject, of course, to the supreme necessities of war—where the men of the third and fourth battalions were ordered abroad on active service, their own officers should go with them. They would also undertake that of the officers below the rank of lieutenant-colonel in the third and fourth battalions, not more than one half in each rank should be regular officers. There was no present intention to make anything like one half of the subaltern officers of those battalions regular officers. The question of the organisation of the artillery of the special contingent was one of considerable intricacy and difficulty, but the military authorities had been at work upon it for some time, and they had, he was glad to say, made considerable progress. It seemed probable (he was afraid he could not go beyond that) that those artillery special reservists would be organised in units, and in that case they also would have their own officers, who would have promotion in their units as at present. With regard to the establishment and numbers of the third and fourth infantry battalions, there would be equality, and both the third and fourth battalions would have a chance of being used as units in war, as well as of supplying drafts. In Ireland it was proposed to maintain twenty special contingent battalions out of a total of twenty-eight existing Militia battalions. In Great Britain it was proposed to maintain eighty-one battalions out of a total of ninety-six existing Militia battalions. The remaining battalions—viz., eight in Ireland and fifteen in Great Britain—would, as regarded both officers and militiamen, be absorbed, if they so consented, into the battalions which it was intended to maintain and they would accordingly disappear as battalions. With regard to the transfer of Militia battalions to Reserve, that, of course, was a point of very great importance, and one which had been recognised, and pressed upon His Majesty's Government as one of very great importance, by those who were interested in the Militia.

The Marquess of SALISBURY: The existing militiamen?

*The Earl of PORTSMOUTH: Yes. He was about to suggest a clause which it was hoped might meet the views of noble Lords, and perhaps it would be convenient to the House if he read it. It was proposed to insert as a new clause after Clause 32——

The Marquess of SALISBURY: It is not on the Paper, is it?

*The Earl of PORTSMOUTH said it was not on the Paper, but he thought it would be well for him to read it to the House. If it met with the approval of the House it could be inserted either in Committee or at the Report Stage. At any rate, it was part of his statement, and he wished noble Lords to know the exact words—

"(1) His Majesty may by Order in Council transfer to the Army Reserve such battalions of Militia as may be specified in the Order, and every battalion so transferred shall, from the date mentioned in the Order, be deemed to have been lawfully formed under this part of this Act as a battalion of special reservists. (2) As from the said date every officer of any battalion so transferred shall be deemed to be an officer in the reserve of officers, and every man in such battalion shall be deemed to be a special reservist, and the Order may contain such provisions as may seem necessary for applying the provisions of the Reserve Forces Act, 1882, as amended by this Act, to those officers and men; provided that if any officer or man in any battalion so transferred at the time of such transfer indicates his objection, nothing in this Order shall affect his existing conditions of service."

He was aware that it had been pressed and held by many noble Lords that for practical purposes it was not desirable—and it was a point which he himself appreciated very much—to make these men sign a new attestation paper. His Majesty's Government were confronted with considerable difficulties in that respect. He supposed it could be done by Act of Parliament, but it appeared to His Majesty's Government that it would be a very strong and high-handed proceeding to transfer all these men in units, subjecting them to new and different terms of service, without their having to sign a new attestation paper. But he thought the difficulty would practically be met, because of course the bounty would not be given until the attestation paper was signed. One of the points on which he had been written to by noble Lords was as to whether he could lay upon the Table of the House the form of attestation paper which was proposed. He was not able to do so at that moment, because it had not yet reached a form which had been finally approved by His Majesty's Government, but he would take the earliest possible opportunity of doing so, and of course as few changes as possible would be made. Before concluding his statement, he would like to refer to a statement which had appeared in *The Times* newspaper, headed "From our Correspondent," dealing largely with the question of the promotion of officers. While he thought that statement was perfectly accurate at the time, as a description of what might have existed under the former conditions, it was not accurate now, as regarded the present proposals of the Government. He did not know whether it would be wise—he thought perhaps it would—for him to repeat exactly what was the position of His Majesty's Government in regard to those officers. All field officers would be offered transfers to the special contingent for service as reserve officers with the third or fourth battalions, and would be posted to those battalions. He hoped that was quite clear. The majors would, if they were considered qualified, be available for promotion to the lieut.-colonelcy to command battalions. The lieut.-colonel commanding the third or fourth battalion would be taken either from the majors of the reserve of officers serving in their battalion, if considered fit to take up the command of a battalion, or from the retired regular officers if the reserve officer of field rank was not fit. Not less than one half of the majors serving in the third and fourth battalions would be drawn from the non-regular officers serving in those battalions.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND asked what was to happen to the present commanding officer of the regiment.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: He goes on; there is no reason why he should not go on. Of the officers below the rank of major in the third and fourth battalions, not more than one half in each rank would be Regulars, but there was no intention of making anything like one half of the subaltern officers Regulars.

LORD RAGLAN inquired whether the Regular officers would be senior to all the Militia officers, or whether they would rank as from the date of their appointment.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said that was a point which he could not answer off-hand. All the officers serving in the third and fourth battalions as Reserve officers would receive £20 per annum, in addition to pay, up to the age of thirty-five, on reaching which age they would cease to draw the £20 per annum, but might, if they so desired, remain in the third or fourth battalion, and would be eligible for promotion up to the rank of lieutenant-colonel in those battalions. Captains of over thirty-five now serving in the Militia could remain in their battalions, if they wished, as Reserve officers. They would be eligible for promotion up to the rank of lieutenant-colonel, but would not receive the £20 a year. He had been perfectly frank and had told the House exactly what were the intentions and proposals of His Majesty's Government. He had, so to speak, put all his cards upon the table, and he hoped and trusted that with regard to this controversy, although there might still be some difficulties to be got over with regard to matters of form, and although they might still have to discuss some further questions, the House would be of opinion that he had shown that, consistent with the principles of their scheme, His Majesty's Government had endeavoured to meet the views of noble Lords on the opposite side of the House in respect to the Militia, because he was sure that the present members of the Army Council were as much in sympathy with, and appreciated quite as much what had been done in the past by, the Militia as any noble Lord on the Opposition side of their Lordships' House.

THE EARL OF ONSLOW: I understand the noble Lord accepts the Amendment.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: I accept the Amendment of the noble Duke.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

*THE EARL OF SCARBROUGH, in moving an Amendment to omit the Yeomanry from the Territorial Force, said he was afraid that his Amendment would not be so easily disposed of as the one which had just been dealt with. His object in moving the Amendment was to ask their Lordships to consider very seriously before they consented drastically to change the whole character and position of the Yeomanry force by levelling it down to the conditions of the infantry of the Territorial Army—which were Volunteers under another name—and by placing it under local civil administration. What was the position?

The Yeomanry force was admittedly in a satisfactory state. It had climbed to its present position after many vicissitudes. Fifteen or more years ago the Yeomanry were in danger of extinction, and he thought it was extremely probable that had it not been for the steadfast belief in the potentialities of that force on the part of His late Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge, the Yeomanry would have ceased to exist. The military authorities of that time, however, decided that if the Yeomanry was to justify its existence, and its inclusion in the general mobilisation scheme of home defence, it must be entirely re-organised and increase its efficiency. To that demand there was a ready response; pressure was put on, and this, coupled with the sympathetic treatment which the force received at that time, resulted in its steady improvement; so that in 1899, when the crisis occurred in South Africa, the force was able to furnish, or at any rate to provide the nucleus of, the much-needed mounted reinforcements in the field. He did not think it was too much to say—in fact there could be no question whatever—that if the Yeomanry organisation had not existed in this country at the time of that crisis, the difficulties of Lord Roberts would have been enormously increased and his movements hampered, if not entirely paralysed. He imagined that it was in order to provide against such crises in the future that they were now endeavouring to make arrangements. He believed that was the only question in regard to Army reform that the general public in this country cared a straw about. Noble Lords had to ask themselves how this scheme was going to safeguard national and imperial interests in this respect, how it was going to provide for expansion outside the Regular Army, so that the Regular Army, if need be, in time of stress might be supported in the field. The then Secretary of State, Viscount Midleton, immediately after the war realised the value of the Yeomanry force for this purpose, and he trebled its establishment. He doubled the period of training; he brought the Yeomanry force under the Militia Act of 1882, and required a higher standard of efficiency—all the time, however, treating the force sympathetically. Again, what was the result? That during the past five years the Yeomanry found itself the only branch of the Auxiliary Forces which was able to maintain its strength; and further he was confident that if general officers commanding-in-chief in their various commands were asked the question they would say that for a partially-trained force the Yeomanry had to-day reached a standard of efficiency which could only be characterised as high, and which ten years ago would have been thought to be absolutely unattainable. How had that been brought about? He thought it was tolerably obvious to those who had taken any interest in the matter, and it was certainly the conviction of commanding officers of Yeomanry, that it was entirely due to liberal treatment, whereby they had been enabled to attract to join the Yeomanry a class of men who had a knowledge of riding and of the care of horses. If they ceased to make the force sufficiently attractive to attract that class, they would cease to tap that class altogether for the purpose of defending the country, because it was perfectly clear to him that men of that class would not serve in any other branch of the Auxiliary Forces. That was the position to-day, when they were confronted with the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War, and, having regard to the efforts that the Yeomanry had recently made, he could only say that as far as that force was concerned the terms offered were most discouraging. They were asked to sacrifice their position under the Militia Act of 1882; to come under civil administration—which was going back to the early days of the history of the force—and to serve under Army rates of pay during the annual training. And, as far as he understood, they were asked to do work outside the annual training—which included the very important annual musketry course—for no pay at all. He would like to get a clear understanding on that point from the Under-Secretary for War. He understood that outside the annual training no pay or allowance of any kind would be given to the force for any work that they might undertake. In addition to that they were to have their training curtailed, but were asked to reach a higher standard of efficiency, and to undertake more obligations, and, apparently, to do—or to ask the men to do—a certain amount of individual training during the winter months, also without any recompense whatever. In the opinion of the Yeomanry commanding officers that was a retrograde step, and one calculated to reduce the numbers, to impair the efficiency, and to destroy the character of the Yeomanry force. And what were the arguments on the other side which made it worth while running those risks ? They were told that it was absolutely essential that there should be rigid uniformity of terms and conditions in the Territorial Army, that they were to be all raised, trained, paid, and organised on one simple plan. Presumably that was to save money, but he suggested that the only way in which money would be saved over that scheme would be in not getting the men at all. If some of the elasticity found in the Bill were to be introduced into the scheme itself, there might be a better chance of meeting the reasonable requirements of the men who were willing to serve. No doubt if they had some form of compulsion they could get absolute uniformity of terms and conditions, but not under the voluntary system. They must, under a voluntary system, recognise the variety of classes of men who were willing to come in. That fact had been worked out long ago by Yeomanry regiments in the light of local experience; and he believed that was also the case in regard to the Volunteers. He admitted that it was possible to approach more nearly to uniformity—that was to say uniformity of cost—if they could strike an average for each branch ; but that did not appear to have been done, as far as he could gather. Mr. Haldane seemed to have discovered that there were two Yeomanry corps in the Highlands of Scotland who lived a very simple life ; they could be fed for very little—he was told under 1s. a day—and, moreover, they could provide horses for an extraordinarily small sum. Mr. Haldane seemed to have been inclined to form his opinion as to the general requirements and needs of the Yeomanry force upon his knowledge of those two regiments. It was perhaps natural that he should do so, because the only two representatives of the Yeomanry force on the "Duma" were the two noble commanders of these two Highland regiments to which he had referred. Their Lordships would, he thought, agree that any bodies of men who were trained and organised by noble Lords like Lord Lovat and Lord Tullibardine were bound to be both useful and efficient ; but those regiments could not be taken as a pattern for the purpose of trying to standardise the Yeomanry as a whole, because they did not bear any resemblance, in many essential respects, to the rest of the force. He quite agreed that in some cases—perhaps in many—the messing of Yeomanry regiments was excessive, and ought to be reduced, but if it were reduced to the point which Mr. Haldane desired they would sweep away the class of Yeomanry which they had now got. He would suggest to the noble Lord the Under-Secretary for War that he should see if he could not cause an augmentation of the messing allowance which it was proposed to give, on the ground that the time of training was a period of high pressure and real hard work, and that if it were desired to get the best out of men they must at least be helped to live up to their usual standard. Then there was the question of uniformity of pay, and here the commanding officers submitted that men who joined with a knowledge of riding and of the care of horses were worth paying extra for, and that the practical difference between a Yeoman who had a horse to look after—which he very frequently owned—and saddlery to clean, and a rifleman who had neither, demanded additional remuneration, which might well be given in the form of extra duty pay, or some allowance of that kind. That was a point which those for whom he spoke considered essential. Moreover, if well treated in peace time he would probably undertake greater obligations than at present, and would be perfectly ready to serve at regular rates on mobilization in time of war. There were two more points to which he desired to draw the attention of the Under-Secretary for War. First, it was generally understood that the Yeomanry were to have a reprieve for three years—that the force would not be disturbed for that period. That was only very partially the case. It was true that recruits and non-commissioned officers were to be allowed to enlist and to re-engage under present terms and conditions, which would practically carry them on—if they were willing—until the year 1910. But that concession was not allowed in the case of privates, and that was a point about which commanding officers felt very strongly. They were particularly anxious that regiments should be kept together during the period of doubt and uncertainty which was bound to be created under the scheme before them. There was already a feeling of unrest, and he could give an instance of one regiment which last year was enabled to re-engage cent. per cent. of its men, while in the month of June in the present year under 20 per cent. of the men came forward to re-engage. What they who were interested in the Yeomanry were anxious about was that the men should not be frightened away; and even for the success of the scheme—if it was going to be a success—he suggested that a period of three years respite would be a great advantage in accustoming the men to the new ideas which they would have to face. Mr. Haldane had likened his scheme, or system, to a cone. Was it too much to ask—was it unreasonable to ask—that he should first turn his attention to the base of that cone, and be sure that he had got a firm foundation of County Associations and territorial infantry, before he interfered with a force which was in being, and in a high state of organisation and efficiency. The noble Duke (the Duke of Bedford), speaking for the Militia, had suggested that the same period of grace might be allowed in the case of that branch of the Auxiliary Forces; and he (the Earl of Scarbrough) suggested that it would be not only possible, but reasonable, that both the Militia and the Yeomanry, for that period of three years, should be allowed to continue to serve under the Act of 1882. The second point he wished to refer to was the question of the Special Contingent which the Yeomanry were asked to provide to the number of a troop from each regiment for the Expeditionary Force. He had very little doubt that those men would be forthcoming, if they were asked for in the right way. But there was a right way and a wrong way, and it seemed to him that His Majesty's Government had chosen the wrong way. As he understood it, those men were to be supernumerary to Yeomanry regiments, which was quite right. But they were to be obtained under Part III., Clause 29, of the Bill. That meant that they were to be Regular Reservists. Yeomanry regiments would have practically little or nothing to say to them; they would be nominally attached to Yeomanry regiments; they would be enlisted anywhere and everywhere, and as far as he knew many of them might be men who simply came for a job. That was not the class of men required, and if Yeomanry regiments were to be answerable for that Special Contingent, he suggested that they should be obtained not under Part III., but under Part II., Clause 12, Sub-section (2) of the Bill; that was to say, that they should be men actually in a Yeomanry regiment, preferably who had done one training; that they should volunteer with their officers from their regiments, and that when they had done their special terms of service, they should return and be absorbed into their regiments, where they would be extremely valuable as non-commissioned officers. Under the method by which it was now proposed to raise them, he feared that there would be a very poor response indeed. There was one other matter with respect to the Special Contingent about which he would like to ask the noble Earl a question, viz., bounties. He understood that there were to be bounties both in peace time and in war time, but they had heard nothing as to the amount. Perhaps the noble Earl would later on be able to tell them what amount of bounty was to be given in time of peace, and also what amount was to be given in time of war. Then there was the question, How were they going to maintain this Special Contingent in the field? What provision was there for wastage? As far as he could make out, there was none. He desired also to say a word on the much larger question with which the future of the Yeomanry was bound up—namely, the question of expansion in times of great crisis outside the Regular Army. If that contingency was not provided for, he could not see any earthly object in meddling with the force and interfering with its present position. He knew he would be answered that the Territorial Army must have its quota of cavalry. But he would reply to that that the Territorial Army was restricted in its service to the United Kingdom, and, owing to the nature of the country, 20,000 cyclists would be equally useful and much more economical. The true *rôle* which the Yeomanry should be asked to play—the *rôle* that would be of real value to the State—would be this. They should be enlisted in future to serve anywhere within the Empire in times of great stress, and those were the only times when they would ever be asked to do so. He was perfectly certain that military authorities knew and recognised that that was the service which they required of them, and they knew that in times of emergency they would want every man they could get. He was perfectly ready to admit that if they had universal training they could rely on volunteering when the crisis arrived, because men who were partially trained were much more ready to come forward than those who were not trained at all. That had been amply proved in the South African War. While over 50 per cent. of the trained Militia volunteered for active service, only one-tenth of the less-trained Volunteers came forward, and of the untrained and unorganised bulk of the male population of fighting age, only one in 1,000. If they relied on the voluntary system, they trained only a few to do the work of the nation, and that being the case, they must be sure of getting the bulk of those few when the emergency arose, otherwise they were embarking upon a pure gamble. They had recognised this necessity in the case of the Militia, and sooner or later they would have to recognise it in the case of the Yeomanry—unless they were prepared to increase largely the Regular cavalry. He thought the Yeomanry were just as likely to take upon themselves that obligation as they were to accept the offer which Mr. Haldane had now made to them. As he had said before, that offer was most discouraging, and, as his noble friend Lord Harris had said the other night, it was in some respects degrading. In the few words that he had addressed to their Lordships, he had spoken with an added sense of responsibility, because he had endeavoured, as far as he could, to represent the views of the commanding officers of the Yeomanry. He wished it to be clearly understood that although those officers were ready at all times to do their best, still, as the Yeomanry stood under the scheme in its present form, they must decline to take any responsibility whatever for the ill effects —and possibly the disastrous effects— which they feared these changes would have on the force.

Amendment moved—

"In page 3, line 12, to leave out the word 'Yeomanry.'"—(*The Earl of Scarbrough.*)

*EARL ROBERTS said he could not speak as a commanding officer of Yeomanry, but he could speak as a commander who had had a great deal to do with Yeomanry in the field; and he most earnestly hoped that nothing would be done either in this Bill or in any other Bill to detract from the efficiency of the Imperial Yeomanry as it now existed. It had been for many years past certain that a larger number of mounted troops would be required in war than was formerly the case; much larger areas of ground had to be covered; troops had to be dispersed in greater breadths and lengths than formerly; and under no circumstances could infantry possibly hope to cover the whole extent of ground on which operations would be carried on either before an action, or during an action, or after an action. More mounted troops were essential. He had been so firmly impressed by that necessity that when he came back from South Africa the first thing he did was to impress it upon the authorities at the War Office for having a larger number of mounted troops. And the only way he saw by which that could possibly be effected, without increasing the Regular cavalry—which would be hopeless on account of the expense—was to increase the Yeomanry. It had been his hope then that by appealing to Yeomanry Officers, and pointing out to them what their *rôle* would be in future wars—not so much the *rôle* of cavalry as the *rôle* of mounted rifles— they would be induced to respond, and that they would get their regiments fitted to fulfil that *rôle*; and he must say that they had responded in the most remarkable manner. He himself had seen, he believed, nearly every Yeomanry regiment in the country; he had seen them when he was Commander-in-Chief, and he had constantly seen them since. He thought that the Yeomanry as at present trained was as useful a body of men as they could possibly hope to have; but he much feared that they would not remain such a useful body if they were to be treated in the way in which he understood it was now proposed to treat them. His hope was that the Yeomanry would be classed with the Militia, and that they would be placed next to the Regular Army. Of course, he quite understood that if that was to be done the Yeomanry must undertake the same responsibilities as the Militia; they must train more than, perhaps, they had hitherto done; and they must certainly undertake the obligation to serve abroad in time of war. He understood his noble friend (the Earl of Scarbrough) to admit that; and he hoped it would be settled that they should be enlisted to serve abroad in time of war without any question. A certain number might, if required, be retained in this country in time of need; and he hoped that this would be arranged; but he strongly recommended that the mounted troops required for the Expeditionary Force in addition to the Cavalry and mounted Infantry should be Yeomanry, and not, as proposed, the Special Contingent; for that contingent would not be the valuable body that a unit would be. He most earnestly hoped that nothing would be done to prevent the Yeomanry being increased sufficiently so as to enable it to take the field as units—possibly a short time after war had broken out—as a valuable adjunct to the cavalry in the field. The cavalry required something of that sort. In South Africa they always had with them a certain number of mounted infantry. In future wars, he believed that, whatever arrangements might be made now, the mounted infantry would form the mounted troops of a division of infantry. They were more allied with the infantry than either the cavalry or the Yeomanry could be; they were more accustomed to work with infantry; and in all respects they would be better fitted for that particular work than either the Regular, cavalry or the Yeomanry would be. On the other hand, the Yeomanry would be a great deal better fitted to take the place of mounted infantry with cavalry; they had better horses, they rode better, they were more used to take care of horses; and, although he had often told them that they could never hope to be cavalry in all respects, still they would form a very valuable adjunct to cavalry and would do a great deal of work which cavalry would be wasted upon. Therefore he hoped that whatever arrangement were come to now the efficiency of the Yeomanry would not be in any way endangered; that they should be kept as a body ready to take the field abroad when necessary, and that they should be looked upon, not as a training ground for any special contingent, for in the Special Contingent, he confessed, he had no faith at all. He felt that it would be looked upon by the cavalry not as Yeomanry, but as belonging to the cavalry, yet they would not have the training of cavalry—it would be neither cavalry nor Yeomanry, whereas the Yeomanry could take the field as a unit ready to do a great deal of useful work. He had ventured to make those remarks because he thought that he was in a great degree responsible for the Imperial Yeomanry. The very name given to them showed that it was understood to be part of their work to go abroad. He remembered that there had been a great deal of discussion about that name, and that the noble Viscount on the Front Opposition Bench (Viscount Midleton) had often talked the matter over with him; and they had come to the conclusion that the Imperial Yeomanry would be necessarily a part of the Army for the defence of this country as well as to take the field in support of the Regular Army. That was what their origin was, and that was what their object had been; and he sincerely trusted that that object would not in any way be interfered with.

*Lord LEIGH said it would be a great pity if anything were done to discourage the present high class of men from joining the Imperial Yeomanry. The Yeomanry in the past few years had been climbing the ladder of efficiency, until they had attained a very high standard indeed. The keenness of both officers and men was undeniable, and, he believed, undenied. The old class that they were sometimes told of—the Yeoman who looked upon his training as a mere joke and as an opportunity of indulging in all play and no work—if it had ever really existed, had now become as extinct as the dodo. But the Yeoman, good as he was, wished to have some few points conceded. He wished the country to recognize that he was a Volunteer soldier, and he wished the country to give him sufficient pay, and surely those demands were not excessive. It would be a great pity if the fabric that had taken so long to raise should be now broken. With regard to the County Associations, the proposals now before the country were liable to lead to great confusion, great expenditure, and great discontent, among the Yeomanry. It had taken a long time to raise the Yeomanry to its present state; in a very few years it might be called upon again, but once destroyed, it could never be restored to its present condition.

THE EARL OF ESSEX said that one of the chief objections to the Bill was that it would increase the commanding officers' great difficulty in getting recruits both of officers and of men. In the last three or four months—in fact, ever since the present scheme had been on the *tapis*—recruiting had been practically at a standstill. There was, he believed, some excuse for the standstill of the recruiting as far as the men were concerned, because there had been great misapprehension as to the date at which this scheme would take effect, and a great many of the men had thought it was going to take effect at once. It had not been thoroughly understood that anybody enlisting now, or before next March, would be able to enlist for three years on the old system of pay. That misunderstanding had been done away with—it had been explained away, rather—and he believed that the recruiting was now going on in a more or less satisfactory manner. But in the case of the officer it was quite different. It always had been very difficult indeed to get a sufficient number of properly qualified officers to serve in the Yeomanry, and he ventured to say that if this Bill came into force, the difficulty would be increased tenfold, for the very simple reason that anybody now who was thinking of joining the Yeomanry as an officer would think several times before he did so, because he knew that in a year or two the whole character of the regiment he proposed to join would very likely be changed, and also that the class of recruit—the class of men that he had looked to for the last few years—was likely to be changed. He honestly thought—and he spoke from a certain amount of experience in Yeomanry matters—that if this Bill became law, they would lose a very large percentage both of officers and of men whose places would be very difficult indeed to fill. The class of men that they now got in the Yeomanry was a class of men that they could not find every day. It was a class of men quite different from the old class. These men were young, they were keen, they were good riders, they were efficient, and certainly for the time they were out they took a tremendously keen interest in everything that appertained to the work of a soldier. Such men were very difficult to find now. Another point he would like to remark upon was the fact that the commanding officers would be faced in the next two or three years with a very serious and difficult position. They would find themselves in command of a body of men, the old soldiers in which body would be receiving pay at the rate of 5s. a day, while the recruits, after next month, would be receiving pay at 1s. 3d. Was that a possible situation? In his opinion it was an absolute impossibility for anybody to command a regiment under those conditions. It could only lead to jealousy, and it might lead to more serious trouble than jealousy. At any rate, it certainly would not lead to the efficiency of the regiment. There was no force in the whole of His Majesty's forces that had made such giant strides towards efficiency as the Yeomanry in the last six or seven years. They had had, he might say, a "boom" in Yeomanry for the last seven years. Everybody had been keen about it, and had been talking about it, and everybody

—to use a common expression—had "played up" well, and had done their part in making the force as efficient as it was at the present moment. Did they not think that it would be almost a calamity if, by the stroke of the pen, the whole of that labour of the last seven years was lost to England for ever? He for one thought it would.

LORD LOVAT asked the Under-Secretary of State for War if the House was going to have any opportunity of discussing the question of the special contingent. Was the noble Lord going to make a statement on that subject—as to how the Special Contingent were going to be trained, how they were going to be employed when they came into active service, and as to the particulars of their duty in time of peace? He did not think that in either House as yet any statement had been made about the troop of men which each regiment was to furnish for service abroad. He wished to make a few remarks on the subject of the Yeomanry, but before doing so he desired to ask whether the noble Lord was going to make a statement about the probable future of the Special Contingent of Yeomanry.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said that His Majesty's Government would be quite prepared to enter into a discussion about the Special Contingent when they came to Part III. of the Bill. Having said that, he would proceed to call the attention of the House to the Amendment of his noble friend Lord Scarbrough, but perhaps before going into the principle of that Amendment he might be allowed to mention some points on which he had gathered in the course of the noble Lord's speech he wished further information. He was afraid he was not in the position to give him all the details he asked for, but he would be very glad indeed to give him all those he could. With reference to the reduction of pay, His Majesty's Government hoped that that reduction would be to some extent compensated for by increased messing allowance and extra duty pay for looking after the horse and saddlery. A camp allowance of 1s. a day would be paid to the commanding officer, to be expended by him in messing, the cost of which the Yeoman now met out of his pay. They had already heard of the suggestion of giving extra duty pay for looking after the horse and saddlery, and he would carefully consider whether it was possible in any way to meet that matter further. It was for the very purpose of considering this question that His Majesty's Government had made the provisional arrangement with regard to the Yeomanry on transfer to the Territorial Army.

*THE EARL OF SCARBROUGH: I beg your pardon—I did not quite understand about the extra duty pay. Is there to be extra duty pay, and, if so, how much?

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said he could not give the exact figure, but the extra duty pay was to be for looking after the horse and saddlery. Then his noble friend had asked whether musketry pay and travelling allowance for the annual course was to be given in the future. It had been decided not to give musketry pay in future, but travelling allowance would be given for any travelling that the Yeoman was required to undertake. Next, his noble friend had asked whether the fourteen squadrons which it was proposed to employ in the Expeditionary Force could not be enlisted under Part II., Clause 12, into the Territorial Army instead of into the Special Contingent under Part III. In reply to that, he would point out that Clause 2, Sub-section 2 (*a*), allowed the men of the Territorial Force to subject themselves to the liability to serve in any place outside the United Kingdom. He might point out to the House that this clause was intended to apply to such persons as doctors, hospital staff, telegraphists, and others who would not require more military training than they would normally get in the Territorial Force, and that it was not intended to apply to men who would require a special course of preliminary training to fit them for their duties. It was for this latter class that the Special Contingent, with its six months preliminary training, was specially designed. Under Clause 13, which dealt with the preliminary training of the Territorial

Force, his noble friend would see that continuous training was not to be required unless provided for by Order in Council. It allowed for preliminary training to be given in the form of drills, and was therefore quite unsuited for what was required for the fourteen squadrons, the terms of service, the periods of training, and so forth of which were precisely those of the Special Contingent. There were to be six months preliminary training and six days annual musketry training (he had referred to them before in the House), and they did not in any way resemble those of the Territorial Force. It was therefore very difficult to see why these fourteen squadrons should not belong to the Special Contingent. Another and a further difficulty that would be created by attempting to obtain these fourteen squadrons in a different manner from that employed in obtaining them for the Special Contingent, was that it would to a certain extent disorganise the training machinery to be provided for the Special Contingent—the training squadron which it was proposed to form for these men. He did not want, at that moment, to go into all the details and technicalities; but that was the reason why it would be very inconvenient to accept that proposal. The noble Lord had asked what bounties would be offered to the Special Contingent in peace time and on active service. In reply to that, he would say that it was intended to give an annual bounty of £4 and a bonus on mobilisation. The amount of the bonus on mobilisation he was not yet in a position to give to the House, because it had not yet been settled. He would now come to what he thought was rather the point of the Amendment moved by his noble friend; and he thought their Lordships were bound, before supporting that Amendment, to look at its effect. The effect of the Amendment would be to exclude altogether the Yeomanry from the Territorial Army, and to leave them outside both the first and second lines. There was no analogy—no real analogy, as his noble friend had tried to point out—between their condition and the condition of the Militia. The Militia, under the proposals that His Majesty's Government were now making to the House, were practically to go over to the Regular line. If that were done, and if an Amendment of this kind were carried, he would like their Lordships to consider what the practical effect of it would be. The War Office might find it necessary to raise new cavalry for the Territorial Army and their Lordships might find it extremely difficult—he might say almost impossible—to persuade those in another place to find money for anything outside the two lines. The practical result of that would be that the Yeomanry would cease to exist. He was certain that that was not the wish of his noble friend, and it most certainly was not the wish of anybody at the War Office. He would take that opportunity of saying, in reply both to his noble friend and to what had been said by the very distinguished Field-Marshal who sat upon the cross benches (Earl Roberts) that they at the War Office appreciated most highly the services of the Yeomanry. His right hon. friend the Secretary of State for War had in another place stretched he thought the limits of generosity in the direction of what was possible at the present moment as regards any pledge towards pay; and he most earnestly hoped that their Lordships would not, on a question of that kind, take any step which might possibly arouse a conflict of opinion between the views of their Lordships and of those in another place on the question of pay—a question which, after all, after the proposals that had been made by his right hon. friend respecting the Yeomanry, which were not to disturb the existing conditions for some time, it seemed hardly wise, opportune, or expedient to raise now. He rather hoped that his noble friend's object in moving this Amendment (which he thought he could hardly expect His Majesty's Government to accept) had been to raise the general question of the Yeomanry. The reason why the Yeomanry, with the exception of the fourteen squadrons required for the Special Contingent, should belong to the second line and not to the first, were these: that only 2,254 Yeomanry as compared with the total number of about 25,000—he was giving merely broad figures and was not binding himself to anything exact—were required in the first line for the fourteen squadrons of the Expeditionary Force; whereas the whole of the remainder were, in the opinion of the military advisers of the War Office, most urgently required for the cavalry of the Territorial Force, if the latter was to be organised, as was intended, on strict military lines. He would like to point out to his noble friend that the effect of his Amendment being pressed—and if pressed being carried—would be to strike them out of the Territorial Force. They did not want them in the first line—they had no requirements for them there—and supposing, for the sake of argument, that they wanted this large amount of cavalry in the first line, the Yeomanry would themselves be asked to subject themselves to conditions of training which he must confess, speaking with some knowledge of the class from which Yeomen were drawn—and a very admirable class it was—they would find most irksome. If the Yeomanry went into the special contingent as a body they would have to undergo six months training, and he maintained that that would be imposing upon them a condition which would be most irksome, and, as he thought, most repellent to them. Of course, they were not supposed in that House to concern themselves with money, but at the same time money did form a very large part of all practical considerations, and the extra cost which would be involved in a proposal of this kind would be very great. Added to all this, in the opinion of the general staff, it would be unnecessary for those Yeomen who were not going to join to form the fourteen squadrons. He did not want to press it too much, or to go too much into detail, but the terms and conditions of service and training of the Territorial Army approximated far more closely to those of the Yeomanry than to those of any other branch of the Auxiliary Forces. His noble friend had referred to the question of pay. Perhaps he would not be wearying the House if he made some statement upon that point. As regards pay, the facts were as follows:—A private in the Yeomanry now received £5 horse allowance and 5s. 6d. a day while he was training, out of which he had to pay for his own messing. The proposed pay would be £5 horse allowance in the case of Yeomen—he was not, of course, speaking of horses for other purposes such as transport—and 2s. 8d. a day made up as follows:—Pay at service rates, 1s. 2d.; allowance in lieu of bread and meat rations, at service rates, 6d. (where feasible, units might be allowed to draw the rations instead of receiving allowance); allowance for groceries, service rates, 3d.; and extra allowances, 9d., making a total of 2s. 8d. Under the organisation which was now being worked out for the Territorial Army by the general staff the functions of cavalry were far more precisely defined than had hitherto been the case. The general staff considered that if the Yeomanry were to be properly trained in these functions it could only be done by organising in brigades and making them the cavalry of an organised force of all arms—that was the Territorial Army. Special attention would be given to their training by means of training squadrons, one of which it was proposed to quarter in every one of the commands, with, of course, the exception of Aldershot. His noble friend had asked for the extension of the re-engagement of privates on existing terms till the end of the training in 1910. He would like just to mention the very considerable concessions that the Government had already made with regard to the Yeomanry. They had agreed to allow non-commissioned officers of the Yeomanry who transferred to continue their present rates of pay until 1910. With regard to privates, the arrangement made was that all men enlisted or re-enlisted before this Bill became operative in their respective counties should be allowed to continue under present rates of pay until the end of their period of enlistment or re-enlistment. They enlisted or re-enlisted for a period of three years, but if they then re-engaged they would do so under the new rates of pay. All men who re-engaged before the passing of this Bill would receive the present rates of pay until the end of their period of re-engagement. They re-engaged for one year and thenceforward at the new rates of pay. He did not think it could be said that the Government had not met, as far as circumstances would possibly permit, the case of the Yeomanry. He would very much regret if his noble friend pressed this Amendment. It was an Amendment which it was quite impossible for the Government to accept, because it was entirely contrary to the whole spirit and structure of the Bill. Of course, if it were pressed, the result would be that the Yeomanry would go out of the Bill, and he thought it would mean, which he was sure was not their wish, that the Yeomanry would be abolished. On the other hand, while he was not at the present moment in a position to give any pledge beyond the statement which had been made as to giving both the War Office and the Yeomanry time to look about, he thought the Government proposals had been most considerate, if not generous. He was quite sure that any further proposals were not likely to commend themselves to those in another place, and, therefore, he hoped in the interests of the Yeomanry his noble friend, who, he was sure, would appreciate that they at the War Office were most anxious to do all they possibly could for the Yeomanry, would accept the good endeavours they had made, with the distinct understanding which he was quite ready to give, that they would always consider, when the time came again, the claims of the Yeomanry. He could not go beyond that.

LORD METHUEN wished to say a few words regarding the Yeomanry. He quite agreed with the Under-Secretary for War that he voiced the feeling of the Committee as regarded the Yeomanry force being transferred to the Territorial Army. He thought their Lordships clearly understood that they required mounted men for the Territorial Army, and they therefore thought it would be quite sufficient if they had the fourteen squadrons which the Under-Secretary of State had mentioned. But the mistake that was made was in reducing the pay of the Yeomanry. He thought that though 5s. 6d. a day was a good deal, they must take into account the stamp of men being recruited in the Yeomanry. These men were farmers who could not afford to leave their farms for pay at the rate of 2s 8d. a day. Nor could the men who worked in the city—because there were a great number of clerks in the Yeomanry—afford to leave their work at that figure. He would far rather see the sum of 5s. 6d. continued, at any rate, for three years. His experience of the Yeomanry, both on service and since he came back, led him to believe that there was no better force in Europe than that of the Yeomanry. The stamp of men now in the Yeomanry was as fine as anything to be got in England, even if they had a compulsory force. These men were a stamp of men they would not get if they reduced the pay, and he was certain the 5s. 6d. a day would yield a better result for the money than they would get by reducing it.

VISCOUNT MIDLETON thought the speech of the noble and gallant Lord would be a measure of the disappointment with which everybody who loved the Yeomanry force heard the noble Earl's statement. They, of course, realised that this particular word if cut out of the Bill would go to the root of the Government scheme; but after listening to the speeches of noble and gallant friends, several of whom had served in South Africa, who knew the old Yeomanry force as well as the present force, they had expected a more sympathetic reply from the Under-Secretary of State for War. The noble Earl had told them that the Yeomanry were more akin in their training and in their possibilities to the Volunteer force. The Yeomanry as reorganised six years ago had been on a par with the Militia. There had been this difference between the Yeomanry and the other Auxiliary Forces of the Crown, that with all their merits the Militia force had been short of men and officers, and the Volunteer force had been full of men but short of officers, whereas the Yeomanry was the only force which was full in both men and officers, and had responded to the full extent of the demands that were made upon them. Was it not a serious matter? He knew from bitter experience that in matters connected with the military forces we were too fond of pulling up everything to see how it was growing even before it had had time to take root. Only six years had passed away, and this force had increased from 9,000 to 27,000 men, and he was perfectly certain that if the reports of the inspectors were laid on the Table it would be found that every regiment, without exception, showed an immense improvement on its condition five years ago. The noble and gallant Field-Marshal had told their Lordships that the first concern which he had when he came back from South Africa was to provide the country with some mounted force, on which it could depend to fill up the gaps, and which could be further trained in case of emergency. The present force of Yeomanry was the outcome of Lord Roberts' solicitude, and the Yeomanry was not merely not to be maintained as it was but was to be placed on a totally different, and, he was afraid he must say, a lower basis. The Yeomanry aspired to be classed with the Militia. The Militia was to be made part of the Regular Army. The commanding officers of the Yeomanry met the War Office last year, and in response to the urgent appeal made to them said they were willing—and they believed their force would support them—to place them on the same conditions as those on which it was now proposed to place the Militia, namely, readiness to go on foreign service. But not merely were they not to be allowed to go on foreign service, but they were told that the fourteen squadrons were to be raised separately as a totally distinct force, the Yeomanry being given the go-by, and to be trained at cavalry headquarters, without any connection with the Yeomanry force from which they received in the last war the most efficient help in filling the gaps in the military force in South Africa. What he ventured himself to say was that that was a short-sighted and a short-memory policy. When the noble Earl told them a few moments ago that the general staff did not want more than fourteen squadrons to reinforce the Regular cavalry, which was not numerous, had the noble Earl and the general staff forgotten how this country had to pour into South Africa in the early months of 1901 30,000 mounted men? And that after the war had been supposed by many to be almost over, and after they had exhausted the whole Regular forces of the Crown. Did the noble Earl really think that in the year 1907 they could afford to forget everything which occurred in the course of that war and to rely on this *obiter dictum* of the general staff, of whom they heard for the first time, that 2,100 men was all that could be expected to be required to support the Regular mounted forces of the Crown? He confessed that he felt in a very great difficulty when he came to deal with the Motion which had been made by the noble Earl. The noble Earl maintained, and he thought with justice, that the Yeomanry deserved better treatment than to be thrust back instead of being allowed to move forward, as they had shown some right to be by their disposition and training. But he recognised also that to strike them out of the clause might prove fatal to the Bill. Was it not possible even now for the Government to realise that if they could not grant the Yeomanry their aspirations, they might at least listen to the warnings addressed to them that the action which they proposed to take must result in a serious depletion of the force? What was going to be gained by saving some £50,000 or £60,000 a year at the outside on the Yeomanry force? They had heard a good deal about the necessity of economy. The economies at present made by the Government had reduced the Estimates from a little under £29,000,000 to a little over £28,000,000, and of that a large amount was going to be spent on the Territorial Army. The territorial infantry were going to be raised by from 20,000 to 25,000 men. That might be the opinion of the present general staff, but he had served at the War Office under four Commanders-in-Chief—three Commanders-in-Chief and one acting Commander-in-Chief—and on no occasion did any military authority there during that time inform the Secretary of State that they were deficient in the infantry of what was now to be the Territorial Army. On the contrary, they were told time after time that they had a great deficiency in artillery, cavalry, and mounted troops, but they had a surplusage of infantry. The Government were now going, on the grounds of economy, to save £100,000 on the Yeomanry and at the same time to add £250,000 for these 25,000 additional infantry, who, according to all the authorities, including that of Earl Roberts, were not required, and for 10,000 of whom the Government were going to spoil a force which was urgently required, and which those who had most to do with the subject said could not stand except on something like its present conditions. He did not wish to waste their Lordships' time at that hour of the evening, but he thought that the depth of feeling displayed on this subject and the conviction of men who had shown themselves patriotic in the past and were anxious to take the most patriotic course in the present instance, should weigh to some extent with the Government, who must feel that some concession was needed. He had endeavoured to consider whether there was any way in which they could meet, not the wishes of his noble friend, but the obvious requirements of the force, without absolutely endangering the fate of the Bill. The arrangement by which the Yeomanry would not be touched for three years gave them some means of compromise; but the Government, acting as they proposed to do against the advice of those who knew most of the Yeomanry, could not expect them to give them a blank cheque in this matter. When the House parted from this portion of the Bill, unless they put something else in it the destruction of the Yeomanry was entirely in the hands of the Government. If the terms the Government proposed were likely, as his noble friends believed, to cause a fresh depletion of officers and men, Parliament would not be able to say a word afterwards, and therefore he ventured to ask whether his noble friend, if he thought it undesirable to strike the Yeomanry out of the Territorial Army, would be inclined to defer to the views of the Government that the Yeomanry could best serve the country as members of the Territorial Army. In that case he would ask his noble friend if he would accept or support a proposal, which he would put forward as an Amendment to Clause 28, that no change in the pay or *status* of the Yeomanry should be made except by Order in Council, which Order in Council should lie on the Table of both Houses of Parliament and be subject to any Motion made in regard to it. At least they had a right to claim for the Yeomanry that during these three years Parliament should have an opportunity of considering what fate was proposed for them; and it was in that conviction and with the desire to forward in a patriotic spirit the view the Government had taken, though he deeply regretted it, and totally dissented from it, that he made this proposal, to which he earnestly hoped the Government would give their earnest consideration.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: Where does the noble Viscount propose to insert the Amendment?

VISCOUNT MIDLETON: After Subsection 1, Clause 28.

*THE EARL OF GRANARD said he felt some diffidence in addressing their Lordships on this subject, although he might say that during the time he served in South Africa he acquired a great knowledge of the Yeomanry serving there, and he, as did others, realised what a great deal of good the Yeomanry did for this country. So far as he understood the Bill it was intended to form the Yeomanry into two lines—virtually fourteen squadrons to be attached to the first line, and the rest in the Territorial Army consisting of twelve brigades. The whole matter seemed to turn on the question of pay. Noble Lords opposite seemed to think that if they paid 2s. 8d. instead of 5s. 6d., they would not get the men. They must see how that worked out. They intended to allow the men to continue to draw 5s. 6d. a day until they had completed their present engagement—that was, for three years. After that period they would come under the new engagement. Several points had been raised by noble Lords. Lord Lovat asked what particular form of training the Government intended to bring in for the Special Contingent. The form of training of the Special Contingent was not absolutely settled. He understood that the present arrangement was that each unit would have fifteen days training with the Regular division to which it was attached, or, failing that, with some other Regular unit. It was obviously necessary that if the Yeomanry were going to act, as they would do, as divisional cavalry they must have an opportunity of working with that force in the field.

LORD LOVAT: Will they only get fifteen days?

*The Earl of GRANARD: They would have six months preliminary training in a training squadron and then probably fifteen days with the divisional cavalry.

Lord LOVAT: But where are the training schools?

*The Earl of GRANARD said the training squadrons would be set up in each regular divisional headquarters. Lord Essex had pointed out that he was very much afraid that under the new regulations they would lose officers. He did not quite follow him in that respect, for, after all, the officers of the Yeomanry were generally men of a certain standing and pretty well off. He did not for a moment think they would lose a valuable class like that. It had often been said that it was a mistake to substitute Yeomanry for divisional cavalry. He had seen a certain number of the cavalry attached to a regular division, and he must say that the ordinary regular cavalry were absolutely lost there. The functions required of divisional cavalry were not very arduous, and were not such as required highly trained men, but men who could ride well and use their common sense. It seemed, therefore, to be a very sound principle to institute these squadrons, and he was perfectly sure they would work excellently in the future.

Lord LOVAT said he would like to take up one or two points of the noble Lord who had last spoken. In the first place, with reference to the Special Contingent, he took it they were going to be trained in schools which were to be instituted in each command—that was to say, it was proposed to train fifteen or twenty men for six months in fourteen different places. How were they going to train men if there were only going to be twenty or thirty of them—there would be only 100 if they all went—at different times of the year in fourteen different places? The idea seemed ludicrous. It was impossible to make them efficient unless they could get a large number of them together. The Yeomanry had to do certain drills before going up for annual training, because it was found impossible to train men in two's and three's for regimental work. These men were to fulfil the most difficult functions of divisional cavalry. There was no harder work in the world than that of divisional cavalry. It was ludicrous to send these men into the field after only fifteen days training with the division. If Lord Scarbrough's excellent idea were carried out they would get a squadron trained every year for six months, and in time people would come back to them as non-commissioned officers, and would undoubtedly add to the efficiency of the unit. He hoped what they had heard from Lord Granard did not really represent the views of the Government on the subject of divisional troops, and that the Government were not persuaded that divisional cavalry work was such an easy matter as he thought, or that the cavalry screen was always ahead of the infantry division. Lord Granard had also stated he did not believe that this reduction of Yeomanry was going to make much difference in the force. Might he tell the noble Earl that one class it would certainly wipe out was the man they wanted in the Yeomanry, namely, the agriculturist who owned his horse? The townsman would take on at 2s. 8d. per day and hire a horse and make a sovereign; but the agriculturist was worth 8s. a day in the summer months, and unless he was paid something corresponding to that he would not take the risk with his horse. The Yeomanry must be trained in June, July, or August, and at that period they had to pay not less than 8s. a day in the private market to hire a man and horse, and it was surely worth more if his horse was to be buffeted about the roads, and tethered outside in a cold camp on wet nights instead of being housed. Which was the man going for? The poor man would go for what he got paid for best, and therefore that class would be knocked out of the Yeomanry entirely by this scheme. He should much regret to support the Amendment of Lord Scarbrough, and yet one felt it was one's duty to do so in defence of the Yeomen one commanded. He felt that if Lord Scarbrough's Amendment was passed it would make a very great difference to the excellence of the work which they could hope for from the Territorial Army, and he thought that if it were possible it was advisable that some compromise should be arrived at. Was it worth while for a saving, by knocking off 2s. a day, of between £50,000 and £60,000, to turn out these men? A saving of £20,000 or £30,000 could be made without doing the Yeomanry this irreparable harm. They might, in the first place, do that which many of the Yeomanry had already done, and which made for efficiency, and that was to have ten or fifteen cyclists in every squadron. It would add to efficiency rather than detract from it. All cavalry regiments had a certain number of cyclists attached in every squadron. If his suggestion were adopted it would save something like £8,000 or £9,000. Then if the horses were hired regimentally a saving of £8,000 or £10,000 could undoubtedly be effected. If a grant of £5 was paid to the man who brought his horse, and a regimental grant of £4 was paid for the hired horse, money would undoubtedly be saved. Then there might possibly be saving in one or two points of administration too small to go into then; but he thought from £25,000 to £30,000 might be saved without the proposed reduction being made at all. He hoped before they tied themselves by passing this clause the noble Lord would at all events try and extract from the Government what was the sum actually to be paid for the extra work of the Yeomanry. He did not think the Government were really dealing fairly with the Yeomanry. They had had innumerable meetings with the officials, and everything that the Yeomanry had been asked to do they had done, and now in the end the Government tried to strike a bargain, and would not say which side theirs was.

*LORD HARRIS said he understood Lord Granard to say that the cause of their dissatisfaction was the pay of the Yeomanry. That was an entire mistake. It was a cause which might result in a very different class of men joining the force; but the cause of their dissatisfaction was that their traditions were being ignored. What they had done in maintaining the force in the face of opposition of every kind, from Parliament as well as from the War Office, and in raising the force to a condition which had won the enconiums passed upon it by Lord Methuen in that debate—that was all to be ignored. Their regard and affection for the force and its traditions were to be ignored and they were to be degraded. He hoped it was not misunderstood by gallant comrades in the Volunteers. He meant it in its literal sense—that they were being put on the level of a force which was junior to them, instead of being kept with the force which was senior to them and to which they had belonged for the last seven years. He trusted that the Under-Secretary for War would impress on his chief the very strong feeling that had been displayed by members of the force and induce him to believe that what they had said was by way of very serious warning as to what they apprehended might happen. They did not speak from any selfish motive, but because they feared the same class of man would not be secured when these very material alterations were made in the conditions of service, and that in the end it would not be an economy to the Government. They would get men who did not understand about the management of horses and were careless about horses, and to whom it would be far more difficult to teach horsemanship. Consequently a great bulk of the saving would be lost. The Under-Secretary for War had had a suggestion made to him by Lord Midleton and he hoped the noble Earl, before this Bill passed, would be able to give some assurance that it had received favourable consideration from the Cabinet. He admitted that some concessions had been made, but he was sure the noble Earl would see the very great difficulty that would inevitably arise among the Yeomanry if two different rates of pay were in force. It would be very difficult to accommodate all the conditions of life in a regiment to two rates of pay, and if the concession could be made as regarded the present men continuing until 1910 on their present rates of pay—that was to say it would give them three years of grace as regarded every man in the force—it might be possible to come to some compromise which would be far more satisfactory to the Yeomanry and give the Secretary of State a far more efficient force than he was going to get under this Bill. The Committee was at present placed in a serious dilemma in voting upon the Amendment. On th one hand, they were threatened wie the destruction of the Yeomanry Force if they supported the Amendment; on the other hand, they saw the prospect of a much inferior force arising in the future. He was disposed in the circumstances to ask his noble friend whether it was not the duty of their lordships to avoid doing anything which might result in the destruction of the force, and to run the risk of allowing the force to remain, even though it might be hereafter inferior in its composition. That seemed the wise course for them to take, and the more patriotic. They had done their best to show the dangers in which the country was placed if this change took place. If the Government, notwithstanding, was resolved under no circumstances to make this change, then the responsibility was not theirs.

THE EARL OF CREWE: The two noble Lords who spoke last, both with great authority, made very moderate and reasonable speeches. They will, I am sure, forgive me if I do not enter into all the technical points which have been raised. I rather desire to address myself to the general aspect of the debate, and to turn to the Amendment moved by the noble Earl opposite. There are, in fact, two entirely separate questions involved—first, whether the Yeomanry should form part of the first or second line of the force of the country, and, secondly, what are to be the provisions of pay as regards the Yeomanry? That, of course, is important, because I am able to gather from the speech of the noble Viscount, and also from other speeches made in the course of the debate, that if this question of pay could be settled to the satisfaction of the noble Earl opposite they would, I understand, join in asking him to withdraw his Amendment. The noble Viscount Lord Midleton complained that the reply of my noble friend was of an unsympathetic character. That is hardly a fair adjective. It was distinctly of an official character, and it was not reasonable to describe it as more unsympathetic than official replies habitually are. On this question of pay, I take it that it has not been a cheese-paring idea of my right hon. friend to cut off £1,000 here, and £1,000 there, so much as to endeavour to approximate the pay of the different parts of the Territorial Army to ordinary service conditions. That has been his idea. It is no doubt true, as stated by the noble Earl, I think, in the course of his very complete opening speech, that it does not do to drive that nail too far home, and that where you have a voluntary Army you are bound to make a certain allowance for the difference between the classes of people who join the different forces. That we fully admit, and, therefore, on this question of pay, my right hon. friend is distinctly open to conviction, and he will consider how far it is possible to meet the views of noble Lords opposite. As to the question whether the Yeomanry should form part of the first line or of the second, I confess I have been somewhat puzzled by the different arguments which have been used. I hear one moment of the Yeomanry being composed of farmers with their farms to manage, of clerks who presumably can only get a limited amount of leave, and who are therefore naturally dependent on receiving a fair rate of pay while they are under service conditions, and then we are told that these men are practically to form part of the Regular Army of the country. That is surely a most puzzling and self-contradictory series of statements. I confess I am entirely unable to understand how, if you propose to go on recruiting the Yeomanry from the farming class and clerks in the towns, you are going to place them in precisely the same position as the Militia, who are recruited from an entirely different stratum of society and who are likely to be able, as we hope, to undertake the obligation of foreign service. I think it is important that that point should be cleared up, because the speech of the noble and gallant Earl, who apparently contemplated that the Yeomanry should be really a foreign-service Army, conveyed to my mind an entirely different impression from that of the noble and gallant Lord, Lord Methuen, who I think, contemplated the Yeomanry forming part of the Territorial Army at home. I am bound to point out once more that the object of my right hon. friend is to form an Army for home defence, of which the Yeomanry should be the cavalry force, and it was in that connection that my noble friend behind me spoke of the acceptance of this

Amendment as possibly involving the disappearance of the Yeomanry Force; and for this reason, that it would be impossible to have a Territorial Army at all unless some cavalry force is attached to it. It has been suggested that 20,000 cyclists should be substituted for the Yeomanry, but I do not know what the military authorities would say to a home defence Army without a single horseman attached to it. As regards the question of pay, as I have said, my right hon. friend is quite open to consider very carefully the question whether it would be possible to approximate further to the present rate of pay, or, at any rate, of allowances, in the new arrangement, and it is with the view of arriving at a decision on that question that the period of delay has been advised. But I am obliged to give a direct negative to the proposal of the noble Viscount, Lord Midleton, that no change in the pay of the Yeomanry should be made except by Order in Council, which should be laid upon the Table of both Houses and accepted or refused by either. I can recall no precedent whatever for the proposal that the pay of any branch of His Majesty's Army should be decided by an Order in Council in the first place, afterwards amended by Parliament. The noble Viscount has sat in another place, and I, unfortunately, have not, but I think he must be aware that it would be altogether impossible for those who sit in another place to accept a condition of that kind in relation to the pay of any branch of His Majesty's forces. There is no precedent for anything of the kind, and I am afraid, therefore, that on this matter of pay we must ask the noble Viscount and noble Lords opposite to trust to the common sense of my right hon. friend, and the natural desire both of the Government and ofthe Army Council that the Yeomanry should prosper. I must tell my noble friend that it is impossible for us to accept the particular Amendment which he desires to place on the Paper later.

LORD MONTAGUE OF BEAULIEU said that if the cavalry were withdrawn from the Territorial Army that Army would practically become a farce, for with the exception of companies of mounted infantry, it would have no cavalry at all. Speaking as a Volunteer, he would like to see the Yeomanry retained in the Territorial Army, but he supported their claim for adequate allowances.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH desired to say a few words on the Amendment in view of the fact that he had been for many years connected with the Yeomanry. It was his duty the other day to go down and receive instruction in further military duties in the position which he occupied in the Yeomanry Force, and he made careful inquiries on Salisbury Plain as to the exact duties which would be required of the Yeomanry attached to the first line of defence. It was explained to him by those who, he believed, were thoroughly qualified to judge of what would occur in the event of an Army corps being sent abroad, that in the first place there would be a great screen of cavalry under an independent command; they would be supported by a screen of mounted infantry, and behind would march the divisional troops, and the duties of the squadron of Yeomanry attached to each division would be to protect those divisional troops. He inquired what the exact position of the Yeomanry would be, and was assured that the Yeomanry as a unit would never be preserved; the squadron itself would never be preserved, but would be broken up into sections for various duties connected with the division. Therefore the position of the commanding officer would be of no use at all, as he would have nothing whatever to do. If that was the exact position which the Yeomanry were going to occupy with regard to the division to which they would be attached, it seemed to him a considerable waste of time and money that the squadrons which were to be employed in the first line should go through six months training in the various other duties to which noble Lords had referred that evening. With regard to the pay, of course it was impossible for anyone to say whether they would be able to preserve in the Yeomanry the same class of man they now got if they gave him 2s. 8d. a day instead of the pay he now received. But there was one point in connection with the Yeomanry which he did not think had been alluded to. The evolution of the Yeomanry during the last ten years had been very remarkable. When he as a youth first joined, it was the duty of these men simply to learn and practice sword exercises. Since then they had learnt to use a rifle efficiently, and he believed the ultimate employment of the Yeomanry would be that of scouts. It was not for him to dwell upon the lessons of recent wars, because he was not a military authority, but he understood that the branch of the Service to which the military authorities attached as much importance as to any other was the corps of highly educated men with knowledge of wireless telegraphy and other methods of transmitting information. Undoubtedly in the future an endeavour would be made to train the men who would have to act as screens in front of the army in the acquiring and transmission of information as speedily as possible, and he could not help feeling that the duties in the future of the Yeomanry would be to act as scouts, and by the employment of modern machinery transmit information from the front to the troops in the rear. If that were so, he asked the Government to pause before they did anything which would remove from the ranks those highly intelligent and skilled artisans who now entered them, and replace them with men of lower intelligence and less skill. He therefore associated himself with the proposal of his noble friend Lord Midleton that the Government should defer lowering the pay of the Yeomanry, and that they should only do so by Order in Council, the Papers connected with which would be laid on the Table of both Houses of Parliament.

*Earl FORTESCUE wished to add his plea to those which had already been put forward for sympathetic treatment of the Yeomanry, which was the only force in which what he might call the lower middle classes of the country enlisted. It was the ambition of the Secretary of State, and one with which they must all sympathise, that the Territorial Army in the future should be a national Army, truly representative of the various classes. He did not think that could be said to be the case at present. There were about 4,000,000 people in this country of the class who were assessed for income-tax at anything between £160 and £700 a year. It was notorious that that class did not provide recruits for the Regular Army or for the Militia, or, except in the case of a few special regiments, for the Volunteers; and it was equally certain that from lack of means they found very few officers for either the Army or the Auxiliary Forces. The only portion of the national forces in which they enlisted, except a few class regiments of Volunteers, was the Yeomanry, and it would be a great misfortune if anything were done to check the flow of recruits from that quarter. The efficiency of the Yeomanry as a force had been fully shown in the debates, and it was obvious, considering the shortness of the training, that it would have been impossible to obtain such results unless there had been a very intelligent class of men in the ranks. He hoped the Government would do all they could to increase the chances of enlisting such men in the future.

*The Marquess of LANSDOWNE: My Lords, I do not think that anyone can have listened to this discussion without being deeply impressed by the weight of the arguments which have been advanced by noble Lords who have commanded Yeomanry regiments. They take part in this debate as experts, and as experts they warn us that if the Yeomanry are left where the Bill, as now drawn, leaves them we cannot expect to have either the same number of men, or, if the same number of men, then not the same class of men, in the force in future. My noble friend Lord Scarbrough proposes to meet those objections by an Amendment which would have the effect of removing the Yeomanry from the Territorial Army. If we on this side of the House were responsible for the Bill, I feel little doubt that we should have treated the Yeomanry in a different manner, but we are not responsible for this Bill. It is a Bill for which His Majesty's Government are responsible; it is one which your Lordships have read a second time; and it is impossible to listen to the speeches which have been made from the Front Bench opposite without realising that, in the opinion of noble Lords on that Bench, it is an essential part of their scheme that the Yeomanry should remain in the Territorial Army. That being so, I cannot take upon myself to advise my noble friend to persist in his Amendment. But it is clear that, although the retention of the Yeomanry in the Territorial Army forms a great part of the grievance upon which my noble friends have dealt to-night, it is not their only grievance. They dwelt also upon the harshness of the bargain which His Majesty's Government mean to impose on the Yeomanry, and I must say it seems to me to be the duty of His Majesty's Government, if they do insist upon keeping the Yeomanry in the Territorial Army, to mitigate the harshness of that bargain so far as it is possible for them to do so. The noble Earl who represents the War Office and my noble friend the Lord President have certainly held out hopes that some improvement in the terms which will be offered to the Yeomanry is to be expected, and I certainly trust that before the debate in Committee is concluded we shall obtain from noble Lords opposite a definite offer in that direction. My noble friend Lord Midleton proposed to deal with the matter by the method which he described to the House just now. I gather that that method does not find favour in the eyes of the noble Earl the Lord President, but it does not by any means follow that that is the only means of obtaining for the Yeomanry that, I will not say generous, but just, treatment which they demand at your hands, and I therefore hope that to-morrow we shall hear from the noble Earl in charge of the Bill that it is the intention of the War Office to meet us on those points, as I am bound to say they have endeavoured to meet us at other points in this Bill. It is surely not too much to hope that if economic considerations lie at the root of this proposal it may be possible to effect savings without pressing so heavily upon the Yeomanry as the proposals of His Majesty's Government now press. The sum which is to be saved is, I am told—and on this I do not think my noble friend Lord Midleton has been contradicted—something between £50,000 and £100,000, and I cannot bring myself to believe that it should be beyond the powers of His Majesty's Government to save that money in some other direction or by some other means.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: I am very unwilling to interrupt the noble Marquess, but I did explicitly state that our action was not founded so much upon econòmical grounds as upon a desire not to differentiate greatly between the different branches of His Majesty's Forces.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I am bound to say that argument has been met by some of the speeches made by noble Lords who command Yeomanry regiments, and who have shown, to my mind conclusively, that the class of man you now get belongs to a different social stratum and expects and deserves a somewhat higher rate of remuneration. I therefore hope that as we have been met sympathetically at other points so in regard to this point, to which we on this side attach very great importance, we shall be met not less sympathetically.

*THE EARL OF SCARBROUGH said he fully realised the gravity of the situation which would be created if he pressed his Amendment to a division, and after what had been said by the noble Marquess he had no intention of doing so. But he would once more emphasise the necessity of liberal treatment for the Yeomanry. If the Government would treat them liberally in peace time he was perfectly confident that they would be ready to serve at Army rates in time of war.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Consequential Amendment agreed to.

On Question, that Clause 1 as amended, stand part of the Bill,

THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE pressed for further information with reference to the position of Ireland under this clause. He did so at the request of his noble friend Lord Shaftesbury, who was very much interested in the matter, but whose other public duties had called him away to Ireland that evening. They wanted to know what the intentions of the Government were with regard to the setting up of County Associations in Ireland. The position there was rather peculiar. There were no Volunteers in Ireland, but there were two regiments of Yeomanry each recruiting over about a dozen counties. Was it the intention of the Government that there should be a County Association to deal with those two units of the Territorial Army? He had understood that it was not the intention to set up County Associations in Ireland, but later in the Bill it appeared that the Government intended, under certain conditions, to do so. He thought that, without entering into the controversy whether it was desirable to have County Associations or not, noble Lords from Ireland were entitled to know definitely what the intentions of His Majesty's Government were, and whether there would be any objection to an Amendment being moved at a later stage saying definitely that Clause 1 was not to apply to Ireland.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said he could state definitely that it was not intended to set up County Associations in Ireland. He questioned, however, whether it would be wise actually to insert words in the Bill prohibiting them from doing so.

Clause 1, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 2 :—

LORD MONTAGU OF BEAULIEU moved to amend that portion of Clause 2 which provides that—

> "An Association shall have, exercise, and discharge such powers and duties connected with the organisation and administration of His Majesty's military forces as may for the time being be transferred or assigned to it,"

by inserting the the word "equipment," after the word "organisation." He had placed this Amendment on the Paper with a view of ascertaining whether it was intended to add the duty of equipping the forces to the other duties of the association. On page 4, line 16, there was a sub-section which referred to the safe custody of arms and equipments; yet equipment was not referred to specifically in the beginning of Clause 2. He thought it was important that equipment should be one of the duties of the County Associations, and he would like to know how, when new equipment had to be provided, it would be allocated between the different portions of the forces under the control of the County Associations.

Amendment moved—

> "In page 3, line 23, after the word 'organisation,' to insert the word 'equipment.'"—(*Lord Montagu of Beaulieu.*)

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said the Amendment was unnecessary as the point was already covered. Administration included maintenance, and this embraced questions of clothing, equipment, and so forth. Therefore the insertion of the word "equipment" where proposed by the noble Lord was unnecessary.

The Earl of Donoughmore.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

LORD LOVAT moved to amend paragraph (e)—

> "(e) Arranging with employers of labour as to holidays for training, and ascertaining the times of training best suited to the circumstances of civil life,"

by omitting all words after "training" to the end of the paragraph. The recruiting areas of a great many Yeomanry regiments, especially in Scotland, embraced several counties, and if the County Associations could dictate as to the time when Yeomanry regiments were to come out for training, it might easily happen that one county might fix one time and another county covered by the same corps might fix another. He submitted that the question as to the times of training best suited to the circumstances was one for the officers commanding the units.

Amendment moved—

> "In page 4, line 6, to leave out from the word 'training' to the end of paragraph (e)."—(*Lord Lovat*)

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH thought the noble Lord was under some misapprehension as to the necessity for this Amendment. The only object of the latter part of the paragraph in question was to provide assistance to the military authorities with regard to local circumstances, of which they could actually have very little definite knowledge. There were complaints from time to time that the War Office and the local military authorities did not pay sufficient regard to local circumstances in fixing the dates of camps, etc. The omission of the words which the noble Lord had proposed to delete would have no other effect than to leave things in the present unsatisfactory condition. He hoped the noble Lord would not press the Amendment.

LORD LOVAT said he would not press the Amendment, but he thought the Government might consider the advisability of inserting after the word "ascertaining" the words "from officers commanding units." The paragraph would then read that the County Association should ascertain the times of training best suited to the circumstances of civil life from the officers commanding the various units.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH undertook to consider the point, and, if necessary, to bring up an Amendment regarding it on Report.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

House resumed, and to be again in Committee to-morrow.

House adjourned at half-past Eleven o'clock, till Tomorrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 8th July, 1907.

The House met at quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Portishead District Water Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

Brighouse Corporation Bill.—Lords' Amendments considered, and agreed to.

Fitzgerald's Divorce Bill [Lords].—Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

Heywood and Middleton Water Board Bill [Lords].—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

Wisbech Water Bill [Lords].—As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Colne Valley Water Bill [Lords]; Electric Supply Corporation Bill [Lords]; Killery's Divorce Bill [Lords]; Pasley Children Legitimisation Bill [Lords].—Read a second time and committed.

Kendal Corporation Bill [Lords] (by Order).—As amended, considered; an Amendment made; Bill to be read the third time.

Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Surrey, etc.) Bill [Lords] (by Order); Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill [Lords] (by Order); Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill [Lords] (by Order); Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 4) Bill [Lords] (by Order).—Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill (by Order); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill (by Order).—Read the third time, and passed.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill (by Order); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 12) Bill (by Order); Local Government Provisional Order (No. 15) Bill (by Order).—As amended, considered; to be read the third time to-morrow.

Killery's Divorce Bill [Lords].—Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Lords to request that their Lordships will be pleased to communicate to this House Copies of the Minutes of Evidence and Proceedings, together with Documents deposited, in the case of Killery's Divorce Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Select Committee on Divorce Bills, that they do hear Counsel and examine Witnesses for Killery's Divorce Bill [Lords], and also that they do hear Counsel and examine Witnesses against the Bill, if the parties concerned think fit to be heard by Counsel and produce Witnesses.—(*Mr. Attorney-General.*)

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to:—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill, without Amendment; Rawtenstall Corporation Bill, with Amendments.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade, under The Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Herts and Essex Water, Mid-Kent Water, and Twyford (Berks) Gas." [Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [Lords].

And also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade, under the Tramways Act, 1870, relating to Audenshaw Urban District Council Tramway, Huddersfield Corporation Tramway, Leeds Corporation Tramways, Taunton Tramways (Extension), and West Ham Corporation Tramways." [Tramways Orders Confirmation Bill [Lords].

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 269.]

Tramways Orders Confirmation Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 270.]

PETITIONS.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC (LOCAL OPTION) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Tunbridge Wells, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ARMY.

Copy presented, of Report of the War Office Committee appointed to discuss certain Militia Questions with Representative Officers of Militia [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

NATAL.

Copy presented, of Correspondence relating to the Removal of certain Native Prisoners from Natal [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SOUTH AFRICA.

Copy presented, of Papers relating to a Federation of the South African Colonies [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

RAILWAY SERVANTS (HOURS OF LABOUR).

Copy presented, of Return, in pursuance of Section 4 of The Regulation of Railways Act, 1889, of Railway Servants of certain classes who were on one or more occasions during the month of April, 1907, on duty on the railways of the United Kingdom for more than twelve hours at a time; or who, after being on duty more than twelve hours were allowed to resume work with less than nine hours' rest [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION.

Copy presented, of Fifty-first Report of the Commissioners, with Appendices [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

GOVERNMENT LABORATORY.

Copy presented, of Report of the Principal Chemist upon the work of the Government Laboratory for the year ended 31st March, 1907, with Appendices [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE (ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, AND IRELAND).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 2nd May; *Mr. John O'Connor*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 245.]

SUEZ CANAL (COMMERCIAL, No. 6, 1907).

Copy presented, of Returns of Shipping and Tonnage passing through the Suez Canal, 1904, 1905, and 1906 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Lunacy.—Copy of Return to the Lord Chancellor of the number of visits made and the number of patients seen by the several Commissioners in Lunacy during the six months ending on the 30th of June, 1907 [by Act].

EUROPEAN COUNTRIES (SECOND CHAMBERS).

Address for "Return showing in what European Countries possessing Senates, Second Chambers, or Upper Houses, such bodies are constituted on the hereditary principle and generally as to what constitutional disputes (if any) have arisen during the last ten years between the Upper and Lower Houses of the various European Legislatures."—(*Mr. Edward Dunn.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Income Tax on Colonial Government Stock.

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can give a rough estimate of the value of Colonial Government stocks assessed to income-tax in this country.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The aggregate amount of assessments on income from Colonial Government securities is shown in the Table CLXXXVIII. on page 206 of the Forty-ninth Report of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue [Cd. 3110]. The total in 1904–5 was £13,553,540. It is, of course, the income derived from the stocks, and not the value of the stocks themselves, which is the subject of assessment, and I have no statistics of the capital value of the stocks affected.

Overtime Pay in Horsham Post Office.

VISCOUNT TURNOUR (Sussex, Horsham): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is in a position to state the result of his promised inquiry into the action of his Department in asking telegraphists at Horsham to perform overtime at less than the regulation rate; and whether instructions are to be issued that no supervising official shall in the future attempt to induce his subordinates to accept payment for work performed at a price less than that laid down by the Treasury.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) It was proposed to keep open the telephone exchange on Sundays at Horsham. The duty involved was an extremely light one of a very simple character. Practically it was a watching duty, which in the ordinary course, and elsewhere, is paid by a small special allowance. The offer made to the staff was misunderstood. The particular duty is not a duty proper to or performed by a sorting clerk and telegraphist as such, and there is no question of overtime involved. It was thought by the postmaster that some of the staff might like to perform the duty. But no pressure whatever was put upon any officer, acceptance or refusal of the offer was entirely voluntary. I may add that it has been decided that the keeping open of the telephone office at Horsham on Sundays was not justified by the expense involved.

Supply of Meat to the Army.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he has received a newspaper report and a letter anent the supply of foreign meat to the Army and Navy; and whether he proposes to take any steps in the matter with a view of giving the Colonists and the Home producers a larger share of the Army meat custom.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Nothing is known in this Department of the newspaper report referred to; but, as I have informed the House on several occasions, I do not propose to make any alteration in the conditions of contract for the supply of meat to the Army.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he has received any communication and newspaper report anent the supply of foreign meat to the Army and Navy from the Secretary of the Irish Cattle Traders and Stock Owners Association; and whether he proposes to take any steps in the matter with a view of giving the Colonists and the Home producers a larger share of the Navy meat custom.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The Answer to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative, and a reply has been sent to the association in the usual course. As regards the second part of the Question, a very large proportion of the fresh meat supplied to His Majesty's ships at Home ports is actually home-bred. In the few cases where frozen mutton may be drawn at the option of the men, it is stipulated to be Australian or New Zealand, and there has been no alteration for a long time past in the conditions of the contracts. The letter from the association appears, therefore, to have been written under a misapprehension, and it is not considered that it is necessary for the Admiralty to take any steps in the matter.

Suggested Construction of a Bridge at the Inner Dundrum Harbour.

CAPTAIN CRAIG (Down, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that an accident occurred recently at Ballykinlar Camp, county Down, which would have resulted in serious consequences had it not been for the action of the East Downshire

Steamship Company, Limited, in rendering assistance with one of their barges when a party of men with two Army Service Corps waggons were overtaken by the tide when taking a short cut across Inner Dundrum Harbour; whether he is aware that the waggons had to be anchored and abandoned for a tide and all the baggage had to be taken on board the barge; and seeing that the lives of many soldiers are imperilled at this crossing, whether he will favourably consider making a grant-in-aid, conjointly with other State Departments, towards the construction of a road bridge between Redmond's Point and Dundrum.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Three Army Service Corps waggons stuck when crossing the Inner Dundrum Harbour on the 28th ultimo, and the officer in charge hired a barge from the East Downshire Company to remove the baggage. No lives of horses or men were, however, imperilled. As the hon. and gallant Member was informed by my right hon. friend the late Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Bryce) on the 10th July last year, a bridge would not be of sufficient importance from a military point of view to justify the expenditure of Army funds upon it.

Absorption of the Militia into the Regular Army.

MR. HUNT (Shropshire, Ludlow): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in selecting the Militia battalions to be added to the Regular Army, due consideration will be given to those battalions which in the past have sent large numbers of recruits to the Regular forces, and which are in consequence weak in numbers compared with those battalions which have not been in the habit of sending many men into the line regiments.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Every consideration will be given to this point when the time comes for making the selection referred to.

Delivery of Postal Parcels in Egypt.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will explain why in Egypt inland postal parcels, as likewise those arriving from foreign countries, are not delivered at the address of the consignee, but have to be fetched from the General Post Office unless an additional fee for delivery is paid.

(*Answered by Secretary Sir Edward Grey.*) I am not aware of the fact or of the reason for it, but it is not considered desirable to interfere with the arrangements of the Egyptian Post Office, especially if a change advocated would involve increased expenditure.

Rateable Value of Rosyth.

MR. J. D. WHITE (Dumbartonshire): To ask the Secretary for Scotland what were taken as the annual values for rating at the time of their purchase by the Admiralty in or about 1903, of the 911½ acres of land and 236 acres of foreshore at Rosyth, purchased from Lord Linlithgow for £112,250; of the adjacent property of 266 acres of land and 50 acres of foreshore purchased from Mr. Newton for £22,500; and of the adjacent 6¼ acres of land purchased from the Minister of Inverkeithing and Mr. Newton jointly for £4,800, respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) The total rental of the lands acquired by the Lords of the Admiralty from the Marquess of Linlithgow in 1903 was £1,321 19s. 2d., from Mr. Newton in the same year £335 3s. 8d., and the rental of the glebe lands of Inverkeithing, the greater part of which was acquired by the Lords of the Admiralty, was £16. The extent of the foreshore is not shown in the valuation roll, nor can the acreage given in the Question be guaranteed.

Money raised in Ireland for the Department of Agriculture.

MR. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): To ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland) how much money has been raised in Ireland since the constitution of the Department for purposes in connection with it by the councils of the counties, county boroughs, and urban districts, taken as a whole up to the most recent date for which the figures are available; how much was so raised in the last financial year; how much has been expended by the Department on services other than those which existed prior to 1899, during the whole period up to the same date and also during the last financial year; how much of these two last-named amounts were contributed by the Department in aid of the agricultural and technical schemes of local committees, and were otherwise expended respectively; what is the present annual income of the Department from all sources; and how much of it is applicable to services other than those which existed prior to 1899.

(*Answered by Mr. T. W. Russell.*) The reply to the above Question is as follows:—

	£
(1) Amount raised since constitution of Department, for purposes in connection with it, by councils of counties, county boroughs, and urban districts, to 31st March, 1907 (*see* Note) -	308,072
(2) Amount so raised in 1906–7 - - - -	55,333
(3) (*a*) Amount expended by Department on services other than those which existed prior to 1899 during the whole period to 31st March, 1907 - - -	1,201,876
(*b*) Ditto during 1906–7 -	229,161
(4) How much of the two last-named amounts were contributed by the Department in aid of agricultural and technical instruction schemes of local committees—	
(*a*) In the whole period -	468,204
(*b*) In 1906–7 - -	107,255
(*c*) Otherwise expended in the whole period -	733,672
(*d*) In 1906–7 - -	121,906
(5) Present annual income of the Department from all sources - - - -	350,517
(6) Amount of income applicable to services other than those which existed prior to 1899 - - - -	211,062

Note.—This amount represents the sum raised by local authorities for the purposes of agriculture and technical instruction under The Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act, 1899, to which purposes it is presumed the Question refers. The amount does not include the uniform assessments made periodically as required on all local authorities under the Diseases of Animals Acts, *i.e.*, the county and county borough councils, for the purposes of the General Cattle Diseases Fund. This fund was established in 1878 in order to recoup local authorities one-half of their expenditure incurred under these Acts, thus lessening the burden of cost in the districts in which disease was most prevalent. There were three such assessments made since the year 1900, the total amount so raised being £47,508. Each assessment was at the rate of ¼d. in the £ on the net annual value of the property in all the administrative counties.

Irish Salmon Hatcheries—Expenditure and Contribution.

MR. O'SHEE: To ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland) what amount has been spent out of the funds of the Department (Fisheries Branch) on each of the several salmon hatcheries which have been constructed; and what amount has been contributed locally or by private individuals as regards each such hatchery, respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. T. W. Russell.*) The accompanying statement contains full information regarding the expenditure of the Department on hatcheries up to the present. There was no local contribution to the cost of the construction of the new hatcheries. In cases where the Department contributed to the improvement of existing hatcheries the local expenditure is not known, but it may be taken to have been in excess of the amount expended by the Department on improvement. In the case of all hatcheries the value of the local contribution towards annual maintenance may be taken to be at least double the annual subsidy paid by the Department.

Amounts expended by the Department in connection with the Artificial Propagation of Salmon.

Name of hatchery.	Amount paid by Department in respect of construction of new hatcheries.	Amount paid by Department in respect of improvement of existing hatcheries.	Amount paid by Department as subsidies in respect of fry hatched, etc.†	Total.	
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Lismore . . .	628 2 11	—	541 15 6	1,169 18 5	The amount entered as subsidy includes £125 not yet paid, but is estimated as payable in respect of fry for season 1906-7.
Killarney - -	213 0 6	—	26 6 6	239 7 0	
Ballinruddery - -	11 11 10	—	20 0 0	31 11 10	The amount entered as subsidy was paid for ova supplied by Department.
Aasleagh - -	500 0 0	—	7 0 0	507 0 0	The amount entered as subsidy is not yet paid, but is estimated as payable in respect of fry for season 1906-7.
Screebe - - -	—	90 0 0	132 11 6	222 11 6	
Killorglin - -	—	108 0 0	77 19 1	185 19 1	
Blackcastle - -	—	63 10 0	551 3 5	614 13 5	
Belleek - - -	—	—	136 14 6	136 14 6	
Kilrea - - -	—	—	253 1 1	253 1 1	
Newtownstewart -	—	—	195 8 3	195 8 3	
Newtownbarry -	—	—	25 5 6	25 5 6	
Inistioge - - -	—	—	45 6 0	45 6 0	
Cahir - - -	—	—	12 6 0	12 6 0	
Skibbereen - -	—	—	70 14 9	70 14 9	The amount entered as subsidy is made up of grants made by the Department towards the cost of ova.
Muckross - -	—	—	27 7 6	27 7 6	
Rockmills - -	228 7 8	—	40 18 9	269 6 5	The amount entered as subsidy is contribution towards annual working expenses.
Waterville - -	—	—	—	—	In course of construction.
	1,581 2 11	261 10 0	2,163 18 4	4,006 11 3	

† This is the Department's contribution towards annual maintenance, subject to the "observations" above.

Boracic Acid as a Food Preservative.

MR. CARR-GOMM (Southwark, Rotherhithe): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that borax and boracic acid are largely used in the United Kingdom for the preservation of ham, bacon, milk, and other articles of food; whether their use for this purpose is permitted in the countries exporting such articles of food to the United Kingdom; whether, to be effective, the borax or boracic acid must penetrate the article treated; whether, if so, any deleterious effect can be prevented by superficial washing; and whether he intends to introduce a measure forbidding the application of such preservatives to articles of food intended for consumption in this country.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) I am aware of the facts as regards the use in the United Kingdom of borax and boracic acid for the preservation of certain articles of food, and that in some countries from which such articles are sent here use of these preservatives is prohibited, although in certain of these countries the prohibition does not extend to foods prepared for export to the United Kingdom. If boron preservatives are used for packing such articles of food as hams and bacon they usually penetrate the substance of the meat, and would not be removable by superficial washing, whilst penetration must, of course, occur if solutions containing these preservatives are used for pickling or injection. The Public Health (Regulations as to Food) Bill which I have introduced, and which is now before the House, would enable the Local Government Board to make regulations for the prevention of danger to public health from the importation, preparation, and storage of articles of food intended for human consumption and thus to deal with the matter referred to in the Question.

Disposal of House Refuse at Seven Kings, Ilford.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he has received a petition from the ratepayers of Seven Kings, complaining that the whole of the house refuse for the Urban District of Ilford is being shot in a gravel pit in close proximity to one of the council schools where 1,300 children attend, and within a few hundred yards of dwelling-houses; and what steps he is taking to compel the Ilford Council to abate this nuisance, which is a menace to health.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) I have received the petition referred to, and have been in communication on the subject with the urban district council, who state that no nuisance whatever exists. They referred the matter to their Public Health Committee, by whose direction I am informed that "the refuse is tipped into a disused gravel pit from which the gravel, etc., has been excavated to the distance of several feet, and it is then levelled and covered over with a good sprinkling of gas lime on which is placed a good layer of loam or earth. The refuse is covered up daily." I am also informed that the school mentioned in the Question is 500 yards away. I have been furnished with a report of the medical officer of health of the district, in which he states as follows:—"I have paid visits to the shoot several times a week, at all sorts of times, but on no single occasion did I find any condition of things likely to produce a nuisance or to be detrimental to the health of anybody residing in the neighbourhood, and I am of opinion that while it is treated in the same way as it is at present there is no likelihood of anything detrimental to the health of the neighbourhood occurring." I may add that I understand that the disposal of the refuse at the gravel pit is only a temporary measure until the council decide upon the course they will adopt for permanently dealing with it.

Public Shooting Rights over Foreshore at Muckinish Point, Coope Hill.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will take steps to ascertain for the benefit for persons who have game licences in the county of Limerick, what is the foreshore at Muckinish Point, Coope Hill, on the Shannon, in the county, so that they may shoot over the place without being prosecuted for trepass by the owners of the lands adjoining.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) I will make inquiries, and it will assist me in doing so if the hon. Member will bring to my notice full particulars of any proceedings which may be pending or threatened in connection with the shore in question. I may add that the Board of Trade are not prepared to admit that there is any public right of shooting over foreshores.

Leave of Assistant Clerks.

MR. HUNT: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that ex-soldier clerks and presskeepers employed at the War Office are in receipt of twenty and twenty-one days' annual leave, respectively, after five years' service, whereas assistant clerks (new class), a senior class in rank, receive only eighteen days after ten years' service; and whether he will extend to the assistant clerks the privilege of twenty-one days' leave after five years' established service.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) The regulations as to the leave of presskeepers and ex-soldier clerks are as stated by the hon. Member. The question of the leave of assistant clerks was fully considered two years ago, when an increase in the amount was granted, and I am not prepared to propose any modification of the existing rule.

Rebuilding of Licensed Premises.

MR. HORNIMAN (Chelsea): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the fact that there are a good many cases in the county of London of licensed premises being rebuilt or altered not according to the plans approved by the justices of the peace; and whether he can procure a Return as to the number of the same which have been discovered since 1905.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I have no information to the effect of the first paragraph of the Question. It is not a matter in which I have any jurisdiction, and I do not think that it would serve any useful purpose to endeavour to obtain a Return such as that suggested. It is provided by Section 11 (2) of The Licensing Act, 1902, that if any alteration in any licensed premises which gives increased facilities for drinking . . . . is made without the consent of the licensing justices, a court of summary jurisdiction, on complaint, may by order declare the licence to be forfeited, or direct that, within a time fixed by the order, the premises shall be restored to their original condition. It is open to any person in possession of the facts to make complaint. It is also competent for the licensing justices to take any facts of this nature into consideration when the licence comes up for renewal at the general annual meeting.

Food and Stock Exchange Gambling—Suggested Stamp Duty.

MR. FIELD: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will consider the advisability of imposing a stamp duty upon all time bargains so as to control and check such options; whether he can explain why *bona fide* contracts should be taxed and gambling operations in food stuffs, shares, and warrants should be left free from tax or duty.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The questions in connection with stamp duties generally are of a very complicated character, and the desirability of revising some of the duties is engaging my attention. I do not, however, think it would be practicable, for stamp duty purposes, to draw distinctions between contracts on the basis of the supposed motives of the contracting parties; and the suggestion that speculative contracts, as contracts, receive preferential treatment under the existing law is incorrect. The only difference is that where a contract is followed by a substantive transfer of property that transfer may attract duty, while, of course, if there is no such transfer no transfer duty is payable.

Deaths from Plague in India.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he can state the total number of deaths in India from plague since it appeared, giving the number in each year; and what measures have been taken with a view of prevention.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) According to a Return which the Government of India have lately issued, the deaths are:—

1896	1,704
1897	56,055
1898	117,953
1899	134,788
1900	93,150
1901	273,559
1902	577,427
1903	851,263
1904	1,022,299
1905	950,863
1906	332,181
1907 (1st January to 31st May)	991,003
Total	5,402,245

The preventive measures which have proved most successful are (1) the systematic destruction of rats; (2) disinfection of houses and clothing; (3) evacuation of infected localities; (4) inspection of travellers; (5) segregation of the sick; and (6) inoculation. I hope shortly to lay Papers upon the Table which will give fuller a account of the policy of the Government of India.

Veterinary Surgeons and Medical Officers of Health.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that public bodies usually take the opinion of veterinary surgeons in preference to medical officers of health on questions of post-mortem symptoms and clinical appearances, he will, in introducing any future legislation on such matters, secure to them the same position as that held by veterinary surgeons under the Public Health Acts of Scotland.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The suggestion contained in the Question will be duly considered when further legislation in regard to the public health is in contemplation.

Evictions at Hillsborough, County Antrim.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he is aware that the Hillsborough District Council, county Antrim, have recently served notices to quit on certain labourers who refused to sign a new agreement for an increase of 25 per cent. of rent on their cottages; and whether, in view of the fact that the council refuse to hear a deputation of these labourers who waited upon them to state their case, and the fact that they are being evicted from their cottages, he can say what action, if any, he proposes to take in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Local Government Board have been in communication with the Hillsborough Rural District Council in reference to this matter, and, as a result, the council have appointed a committee to draft regulations under Section 29 of The Labourers (Ireland) Act, 1906, and have resolved that, in the meantime, the notices to quit referred to in the Question shall be allowed to lapse, and that no further action shall be taken in the matter until regulations have been adopted by the council and confirmed by the Local Government Board.

Entry and Training of Naval Officers.

MR. BARNES (Glasgow, Blackfriars): To ask the Prime Minister, whether he has received a memorial, signed by over 220 Members of this House, asking for a full inquiry into the scope and effect of the changes which have been introduced of late years in respect of the entry and training of officers of all branches of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines, and in the system of providing engine-room complements; and what action he proposes to take in the matter.

(*Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*) I have received the memorial in question, but I have nothing to add to the statements that have been made in Parliament on behalf of the Admiralty in regard to this matter.

Government Contracts—Fair Wage Clause.

MR. STEADMAN (Finsbury, Central): To ask the Prime Minister, if he can inform the House when he intends to appoint the Departmental Committee promised by him to inquire into the working of the Fair Wage Resolution of the House of Commons of 1891, as embodied at present in Government contracts.

(*Answered by Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.*) The terms of reference are at present under consideration. There will be no avoidable delay in appointing the Committee.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Fleet Logs.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware of the custom of the Navy to enter in the signal logs the names of the ships assembled in a fleet and to signal certain information every Sunday; whether he is aware that the logs of the Channel Fleet show that, instead of the nominal strength of fourteen battleships, the Channel Fleet numbered, on each Sunday, 5th May to 23rd June inclusive, 11, 11, 11, 10, 10, 10, and 10 battleships, so that four battleships have frequently been away without replacement; and whether, under these circumstances, the Board desires to modify the official statement issued on 17th June that, as a rule, not more than two battleships at the most are absent, but three have on occasions been absent.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): The previous reply referred to by the hon. Member did not profess to give the number of battleships actually present with the flag, but only the number not in dockyard hands. I am surprised at the hon. Member being able to quote from an official book containing confidential information which should not be accessible to persons outside the active service.

MR. BELLAIRS: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that in reply to a previous question, on 24th June, the Civil Lord of the Admiralty said that no ships were away from the Channel Fleet, whereas as a matter of fact the "Dominion," the "New Zealand," and the "Triumph" were all away in dockyard hands? Is there any explanation on the part of the Admiralty?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: My reply is strictly correct. If the hon. Member will give me any information which is inconsistent with it I will look into the matter.

German Naval Returns.

MR. MOND (Chester): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether his attention has been called to the fact that the eight ships of the "Hagen" type are in the Return, Fleets (Great Britain and Foreign Countries), enumerated in the list of German battleships of the line; and whether, in view of the fact that in the German official accounts these vessels are described as armoured coast-defence vessels, he can see his way in future Returns to have these vessels transferred from the battleship class to the coast-defence class.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I am informed that in the German Navy Estimates for 1907 these ships are classified as battleships.

Torpedo Boat Wreck off Berry Head.

MR. LAYLAND-BARRATT (Devonshire, Torquay): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that the wreck of torpedo boat 99, which sank in the English Channel off Berry Head, lies in the fishing grounds over which the Brixham fishery fleet work, and is a source of danger to the trawling gear employed; and if the Admiralty will take steps to have the wreck efficiently buoyed and to have it raised or removed as soon as practicable.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: A diving party has left Portsmouth to examine the wreck of the torpedo boat, and the future action must depend on the result of this examination.

Naval Ratings.

SIR BERKELEY SHEFFIELD (Lincolnshire, Brigg): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty how many youths, boys, and second-class stokers are on board the "Majestic," of the Nore division of the Home Feet, and her sister ship the "Illustrious," of the Channel Fleet, and the cruiser "Natal," of the Nore division of the Home Fleet, and her sister ship the "Black Prince," of the second cruiser squadron.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The number of youths, boys, and second-class stokers on board the "Majestic," "Illustrious," "Natal" and "Black Prince" are seventy-two, thirty, fifty-seven and thirty-one respectively. These numbers are two, forty-four, thirty-eight and sixty-seven below the normal number of these young ratings allowed in the complements. Both the "Illustrious" and "Black Prince" have been in commission over fifteen months, and the smaller number of young ratings borne in them is due to the majority of the boys originally entered having been rated ordinary seamen.

Fleet Returns.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether his attention has been drawn to the Statement explanatory of the Navy Estimates, page 8, when the First Lord of the Admiralty gives the strength of the Navy as fifty-one battleships, as against sixty battleships given in the issued Return of Fleets (Great Britain and Foreign Countries), while unarmoured vessels are given in the Statement as seventy-six, whereas the Return puts the number at ninety; and whether the Return appears to the Admiralty to afford as accurate a presentation of the strength of the Navy as can be given without entering into technical details.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The paragraph cited from the First Lord's Statement referred, as may be seen from the context, to ships with full or nucleus crews. The Answer to the second part of the Question is in the affirmative.

H.M.S. "Defence."

MR. NIELD (Middlesex, Ealing): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the extension of the time fixed for the completion of the armoured cruiser "Defence," in order to prevent undue fluctuation of work in the yard, is an innovation; and, if not, in how many instances during the last five years has the completion of a ship been delayed for a similar purpose; and whether a similar concession is granted in the case of a ship under construction in private yards.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The reply to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative, and to the last part of the Question in the negative.

Chinese Stokers on British Ships.

MR. BELLAIRS: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the Board have authorised the employment of Chinese in lieu of British stokers in any of His Majesty's ships; and, if so, under what circumstances.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: In accordance with the custom of the Navy of filling urgent vacancies in ships on distant stations by temporary entries from the shore, the commanding officer of H.M.S. "Shearwater," West Coast of North America, was authorised on the 16th May last to employ three Chinese stokers temporarily, in vacancies caused by desertion, until their places could be filled by men sent from home. The draft sent out for this vessel is due at Esquimalt about the 11th of this month. I have reason to believe, however, that no entries were made on this occasion.

MR. LEA (St. Pancras, E.): Has any official of the Admiralty ever obtained the authority of this House to employ Chinamen on British ships?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Yes, it has been sanctioned by successive Parliaments.

MR. LEA: Disgraceful!

MR. BELLAIRS: With regard to the ship "Shearwater," is she not the only ship along the whole West Coast of North America representing the British Empire?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I must ask for notice of that Question.

The "Blake" and the "Blenheim."

MR. BELLAIRS: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty how many vessels whose armament has been or is about to be reduced to fit them as mother ships for destroyers are included in the Return of Fleets as cruisers; and whether he can state what is the reduction of the armaments in the case of the "Blake" and the "Blenheim."

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: In answer to the first part of the Question, the vessels are the "Blake" and the "Blenheim." In answer to the second part, their armament will be four 6-inch quick-firing guns, four 12-pounders, and six 6-pounders.

The Fleet and Cromarty Firth.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Prime Minister, in view of the fact that Cromarty Firth affords excellent anchorage for His Majesty's Fleet, and that the harbour at Invergordon, opposite to which the fleet frequently anchors, is in direct railway communication with both the south and north, will he state whether a Report as to the expediency of establishing a naval base at Cromarty Firth has yet been considered by the Defence Committee.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): The natural advantages afforded by the anchorage in Cromarty Firth as a place of shelter for His Majesty's ships are fully recognised; but no need for creating a naval establishment there is likely to arise. The Admiralty, rather than the Defence Committee, would deal with such a question should it arise.

Foreign Potentates and the British Army.

MR. LEA: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the following officers of the Army on the active list draw any pay or allowances, and, if so, will he state the amount which each draws respectively: Field-Marshal H.M. the German Emperor, Field-Marshal H.I.M. the Emperor of Austria, General H.R.H. Prince Christian, General H.R.H. the Duke of Cumberland, General H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, General H.M. the King of Spain.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddingtonshire): The appointments held by these distinguished personages are purely honorary and they receive no emoluments as officers of the Army.

MR. LEA: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the colonelcies-in-chief of four cavalry regiments and three infantry regiments are held by foreign potentates; whether the latter draw any pay and allowances for that office, and, moreover, when deputations from these regiments go abroad to visit their colonels do the expenses incurred in these visits fall on Army funds; and, if so, will he state what has been the amount so incurred during the last ten years, showing the amount against each year respectively.

MR. HALDANE: The appointments referred to are purely honorary. The expenses involved by the attendance on foreign sovereigns of the authorised representatives of the regiments concerned are borne by Army funds. No special record has been kept of the expenditure incurred in the past ten years, but under the existing procedure the average cost is estimated to be about £65 per annum.

MR. LEA: Am I to take it that this amount of £65 a year is the whole cost incurred by the British taxpayer for a deputation of four or five officers going to Berlin, or St. Petersburg, or Vienna?

MR. HALDANE: Yes. I have myself taxed the Bills on several occasions, and they were less than £30.

MR. LEA: Then do the expenses fall upon the officers themselves who form the deputation?

MR. HALDANE: No. It must be remembered the officers are entertained when they get there, and this accounts for the small expenditure. The small expenditure we incur is one which I consider is most beneficial in the cause of peace.

Military Bands at Political Gatherings.

MR. BRANCH (Middlesex, Enfield): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it was with his permission that a band of the Royal Artillery was present at a Conservative meeting held on 22nd June at Southgate, Enfield.

MR. HALDANE: When asking for twelve musicians of the Royal Artillery band to play at Southgate on 22nd ult., the applicant stated that the engagement was a non-political one. It was on those grounds that the engagement of the band was sanctioned.

Lyddite Shells.

MR. BELLAIRS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether orders have been issued temporarily suspending the firing of lyddite shell at artillery practice.

MR. HALDANE: The Answer is in the affirmative.

Lance Corporals.

MR. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can yet say whether lance-corporals will be appointed in the Territorial Force or not?

MR. HALDANE: There must be lance-corporals in the Territorial Army. I may explain, however, that the permanent rank of a lance-corporal is that of private and that lance-corporals are not shown in establishments.

MR. ASHLEY: Are these lance-corporals to receive the separation allowance?

MR. HALDANE: We will consider that when we come to details.

MR. ASHLEY: Did not the right hon. Gentleman on a previous occasion say that they would?

MR. HALDANE: These details have not been gone into yet.

Soldiers' Kits.

MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can yet say if there will be a free issue of any, and what, necessaries to the territorial soldier on joining the force.

MR. HALDANE: No, Sir. I am not yet in a position to make any announcement on this point.

Siege Guns for the Territorial Force.

MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can yet say whether any siege guns will be included in the artillery of the Territorial Force.

MR. HALDANE: No decision has been arrived at as regards this matter.

Regimental Characteristics.

*MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the walking-out uniforms, which it has been decided to issue to the territorial soldier at the public cost, will preserve any national or special characteristics or distinctions which they have at present.

MR. HALDANE: I may say that every endeavour will be made to meet as far as possible the wishes and feelings of regiments, but points of this kind are not yet ripe for consideration.

*MR. ASHLEY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that this uncertainty is having a bad effect on recruiting?

MR. HALDANE: I am not aware of that.

Bombay Political Service.

MR. HART-DAVIES (Hackney, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the fact that considerable dissatisfaction exists among the military members of the Bombay Political Service owing to comparatively junior members of the Civil Service being placed senior to them on the list; and whether he will take such steps as may remedy the grievance alleged.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. MORLEY, Montrose Burghs): The proposals of the Government of India for the reorganisation of the Bombay Political Department were sanctioned by the Secretary of State in Council in February last. I understand that effect will very shortly be given to the reorganisation.

Madras Railway.

SIR LEWIS McIVER (Edinburgh, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the decision of the Secretary of State on the proposed dismemberment of the Madras Railway was taken on the recommendation of the Government of India and the Indian Railway Board, and whether the opinion of the Madras Government was taken; and, if so, whether the Madras Government approved of the proposed action.

MR. MORLEY: The decision of the Secretary of State in Council on the proposed dismemberment of the Madras

Railway was taken on the recommendation of the Government of India and of the Indian Railway Board. He also had before him the views and suggestions of the Government of Madras, as communicated by them to the Government of India, though the scheme adopted was not that suggested by the local government.

Slavery on the Zanzibar Coast.

MR. HART-DAVIES: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies when it is proposed to put an end to the legal *status* of slavery in Mombassa and the East African Protectorate.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): At the same time may I ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is in a position to make any statement with regard to the measures proposed in connection with the abolition of the legal *status* of slavery in the Zanzibar coast strip and the complete abolition of slavery in the islands.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N. W.): The legal *status* of slavery in the Zanzibar coast strip will be abolished on 1st October next, and the House will be asked in due course to vote the amount required to meet the compensation awarded by the courts. With regard to the latter part of the hon. Member's Question I must refer him to my right hon. friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

East African Concessions.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can state, by a Return or otherwise, what concessions have been granted in East Africa to individuals and syndicates respectively; whether the terms and conditions of the same have been faithfully carried out; and, if not, what measures the Government propose to take to enforce the fulfilment of such conditions.

MR. CHURCHILL: The information for which the hon. Member asks in the first part of his Question will be furnished in the Return granted on the Motion of the hon. Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme. The Secretary of State has approved of the Governor taking action to compel persons who have obtained grants of land to comply with the Crown Lands Regulations respecting the occupation and development of their holdings. Failure to comply with these conditions would ultimately be punished by the forfeiture of the land to the Crown.

South African Federation—Lord Selborne's Correspondence.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if the official correspondence between Lord Selborne and the Cape Colony Government in relation to South African federation will be laid; and, if so, when.

MR MOLTENO (Dumfriesshire): I beg also to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can see his way to publish Lord Selborne's memorandum on the mutual relations of the various South African Colonies which has recently been laid before the South African Parliaments.

MR. CHURCHILL: Lord Selborne's memorandum and relative correspondence will be published on Friday afternoon as a Parliamentary Paper.

Sugar Convention Papers.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if, pending the decision of the Government as to laying Papers on the question of the Sugar Convention upon the Table, the example of the India Office will be followed, and the memorials addressed to this Government from the Colonies on the question will be placed in the Library of the House of Commons for inspection by Members.

MR. CHURCHILL: The memorials in question will be published as a Parliamentary Paper in the course of this week.

Chaining of West Australian Aboriginal Prisoners.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what arrangements for the treatment of West Australian Aborigines have made in consequence of the Report of Dr. Roth; and whether the practice of confining Aboriginal prisoners by chaining them and putting collars around their necks has been discontinued.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. RUNCIMAN, Dewsbury, for Mr. CHURCHILL): Since the Report to which the hon. Member refers, the State of Western Australia has passed an Act with a view to making better protection and provision for natives, a copy of which I shall be happy to show the hon. Member. The practice of chaining natives by the neck while being brought in for trial still, however, continues. The Protector of Aborigines reports that it is the almost unanimous opinion of all who have had any practical experience that this is the most humane method of preventing such prisoners from escaping. I need scarcely say that such an opinion is not shared by His Majesty's Government, and the Secretary of State will desire the Governor, as opportunity offers, to impress upon the Western Australian Government the objections which the continuance of this practice cannot fail to excite in this country.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Did not Dr. Roth's report recommend that this practice should be discontinued, and has the attention of the Government been drawn to the protest of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Perth? Will inquiry be made with a view to its abolition?

MR RUNCIMAN: I will call the attention of my right hon. friend to these supplementary Questions.

Colonial Loans.

MR. WALROND (Devonshire, Tiverton): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if it is proposed to confer any preferential privileges upon the Transvaal in addition to those entailed by the imperial guarantee of its new loan; how far the Government are prepared to follow the principle of guaranteeing loans to self-governing Colonies, other than the Transvaal, who may require capital sums, so as to avoid the friction which may arise from the special advantages to be conferred on one particular Colony; and whether there is any precedent for a loan raised by the Government of a self-governing Colony being guaranteed by the Imperial Government for the purpose of rendering the Government of that Colony independent of a section of its electorate.

MR. RUNCIMAN (for Mr. CHURCHILL): The hon. Member propounds a variety of Questions the Answers to which cannot be compressed into such a short and succinct statement as would be satisfactory to the House at this moment. My right hon. friend has already stated in answer to a Question by the hon. Member for Mid Armagh that the Minister responsible for the Transvaal Loan Bill will no doubt be prepared to make a full statement upon the merits of that Bill at the proper time, and he would also refer the hon. Member to an exhaustive reply given by my right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer to a Question by the right hon. Member for St. George's on 5th June,† in which he gave precedents for Imperial guarantees for loans raised on behalf of self-governing Colonies.

Great Britain and the Sugar Convention.

MR. SEAVERNS (Lambeth, Brixton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, if he is now in a position to communicate to the House any further information regarding the possible withdrawal of Great Britain from the Sugar Convention.

MR. RUNCIMAN (for Sir EDWARD GREY): My right hon. friend is not in a position to make any further statement for the present. The proposal which His Majesty's Government has made is before the other Powers, who are parties to the Convention, and it is not known what decision will be arrived at respecting it.

Sir H. Maclean.

MR. MACLEAN (Bath) asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he had information as to the safety of Kaid Sir H. Maclean, and what measures were being taken on his behalf.

MR. RUNCIMAN: According to Reports received from His Majesty's Minister at Tangier no anxiety is felt by the Moorish Minister of War as to the personal safety of Sir H. Maclean; and, in a telegram received at the Foreign Office on Saturday, Sir G. Lowther states that letters have reached him from Sir H. Maclean dated the 4th inst. His Majesty's Government are urging upon the Moorish Government the necessity of doing their utmost to obtain the Kaid's release without delay, and have expressly warned them against taking any measures which may endanger his personal safety.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clxxv., 671.

Cab Whips.

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that the use of gutta-percha points on whips is capable of producing much more suffering than would result from the use of whip-cord; and whether he will give special instructions to the police that any driver violently hitting his horse with a whip pointed with gutta-purcha shall be prosecuted.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): The police will take action whenever they see a whip cruelly used. I do not think any special instructions are needed.

Mines (Eight Hours) Bill.

SIR J. RANDLES (Cumberland Cockermouth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can state when he expects to introduce the Mines (Eight Hours) Bill.

MR. GLADSTONE: I hope to do so in the course of next week, but I am not yet in a position to make a definite statement.

Workmen's Compensation Act, 1906.

MR. MORTON (Sutherland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will consider the advisability of introducing an Amendment of the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1906, to secure that an employer shall not be liable when an accident is due to the workman's serious and wilful misconduct, if the injury results in death or serious and permanent disablement.

MR GLADSTONE: I see no reason to reopen this question, which was discussed and settled only last autumn. The new provision has only been one week in operation, and it would be premature to consider its amendment.

German Census.

MR. CHIOZZA MONEY (Paddington, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if his attention has been directed to the fact that on 12th June an important census was taken in Germany which will throw important light upon the social condition and vocations of the German people, and which will show, *inter alia*, the number of persons engaged in hand-work or machine-work, or both, and the extent to which home labour enters into manufacturing and trade; and whether in view of the fact that no census department exists in this country, he will forthwith set up a Commission or Committee to take into consideration the British census of 1910, in order that some improvement may be effected upon the methods of the last census.

I beg also to ask the President of the Local Government Board if his attention has been directed to the fact that no complete uniform census of the United Kingdom exists, and that the only census information relating to the whole nation is presented in the form of a small section which appears almost at the end of the General Report of the census of England and Wales; and whether he will give consideration to the question of making the census of 1910 uniform for the whole country.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): I am aware of the occupation and industrial census which was taken in Germany on 12th June last. The census of the United Kingdom is taken in accordance with the Census Acts relating to Great Britain and Ireland, and Bills for the census of 1911 will be introduced in the session of 1910. It is the practice, in anticipation of each census, for the Registrar-General to confer with the Government Departments concerned, with the view of considering any improvements which may be thought desirable. It does not seem to me necessary, therefore, that a Commission or Committe of the kind suggested should be appointed. I will call the attention of the Registrar-General to the point raised by my hon. friend as to making the next census uniform for the whole country, but I fear that owing to the different conditions prevailing in the three Kingdoms, it may not be found practicable to bring them exactly into line in this matter.

Consolidation of the Public Health Acts.

SIR IVOR HERBERT (Monmouthshire, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, having regard to the inconvenience experienced by local authorities in the administration of the Public Health Acts, from the fact that the law has to be sought in a large number of public Acts, and in some cases is affected by private Acts of Parliament, he can hold out any hope of bringing in a Bill next year to consolidate all enactments bearing upon the public health and to confer equal powers in respect thereto on all local authorities.

MR. JOHN BURNS: I am afraid it would not be practicable to confer equal powers in respect of public health on all local authorities. This would involve an undue interference with special powers conferred by local Acts. Moreover, powers which might properly be conferred in respect of one district would not always be suitable to another of a different character. I realise the advantage there would be in consolidating the Public Health Acts, though I think it would probably be found necessary in the first instance to amend them in some respects. I cannot give any pledge as to legislation for next year, but I shall be glad, when opportunity offers, to take steps in the direction indicated.

Imported Match Boxes.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in accordance with his promise given on the 10th December last, he has now made inquiry into the complaint that match boxes manufactured abroad and imported into this country, bearing no mark of origin, are then filled with matches and labelled with the name of a firm of manufacturers in the East End of London, preceded by the words "manufactured by"; and whether he has decided to institute a prosecution in this case.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. KEARLEY, Devonport): The Board of Trade have been in communication with the Customs, who are responsible for the detention of goods marked in contravention of the Merchandise Marks Acts, and as there are legal questions of some difficulty involved in the matter referred to it is proposed to take further legal advice.

Illustrated Journal of Patents.

MR. PICKERSGILL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether in pursuance of the obligation imposed by Section 40, Subsection (1), of the Patents, Designs, and Trade Marks Act, 1883, to issue periodically an illustrated journal of patented inventions, as well as reports of patent cases decided by courts of law, a contract or contracts has or have been entered into for the preparation or issue of such journal and reports; and, if so, will he state the name or names of the contractor or contractors and what are the terms of the contract or contracts.

MR. KEARLEY: This is not a Board of Trade matter, but the Stationery Office inform us that they have entered into a contract with Messrs. Darling & Son, Limited, for printing the journal and reports referred to, and the Controller of the Stationery Office will be prepared to show my hon. friend a copy of the contract if he cares to see it.

Report on German Economic Conditions.

MR. CHIOZZA MONEY: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the forthcoming official Report on German economic conditions will give full consideration to the position, progress, and effect upon capital and labour of the various State railway, forest, mine, dock, canal and other collective industrial enterprises; whether it will similarly deal with the electric light and power, tramway, gas, water, market, theatrical and other businesses carried on by the towns; and whether it will examine the effect upon German trade and capital of a graduated State income-tax combined with a civic graduated income-tax.

MR. KEARLEY: The inquiries now being made will, when complete, throw considerable light on some of the questions enumerated, but it would not be practicable to extend the area of investigation so widely as the Question of my hon. friend suggests without unduly delaying the publication of the results.

MR. MYER (Lambeth, N.): Will the inquiry also be directed to the particular kinds of food eaten by German workmen, and will a comparison be drawn with the food of British workmen?

MR. KEARLEY: I can add nothing to my Answer.

Exports to British Possessions.

MR. REMNANT (Finsbury, Holborn): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade with regard to the exports to British Possessions of articles completely manufactured and ready for consumption, if he can state the principal items and Colonies which account for the decline from £46,500,000 in 1903 to £41,200,000 in 1904.

MR. KEARLEY: The principal items are apparel, certain iron and steel manufactures, steam engines, leather wares, railway wagons, and haberdashery. Practically the whole of the decline in question occurred in exports of these articles to South Africa.

Railway Carriage of Irish Butter.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to a case where a quantity of choicest unsalted creamery butter, sent from Limerick on 24th June, did not arrive at Stony Stratford until the afternoon of 28th June; will he inquire whether this butter arrived in London early on 26th June; if an order is given at 5 p.m. at Stony Stratford to a London firm, whether the butter is delivered next morning; if a box of butter sent from Limerick on 24th June was not delivered at Newport Pagnell on 28th June; and whether, seeing that this conduct on the part of the railway company complained of is tending to kill the Irish trade, pressure will be brought to bear on them by the Board of Trade to forward Irish produce within a reasonable time.

MR. KEARLEY: We are in communication with the railway company with regard to the matter to which the hon. Member calls attention, but so far have not received their answer. On receipt of it I will see that the hon. Member is furnished with a copy.

Agricultural Organisation Society of England.

MR. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether, in the event of effect being given to the Report of the Committee on Small Holdings that an annual grant be made to the Agricultural Organisation Society of England, he will endeavour to secure that an equivalent grant be made to the Scottish Agricultural Organisation Society, Limited.

THE TREASURER OF THE HOUSEHOLD (Sir EDWARD STRACHEY, Somersetshire, S.): Perhaps I may be allowed to answer this Question. We have already received an application from the Scottish Agricultural Organisation Society, Limited, for a grant, and we have promised to bear it in mind in the event of funds being placed at our disposal out of which such a grant could be made. There is, however, no prospect of our finding ourselves in a position to make a grant during the present financial year.

Schools in the Island of Lewis.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will request the inspector of schools for the Island of Lewis to furnish him with a list of schools in the island where there are no arrangements for children's cloaks, when wet, to be hung up, and no shelters to protect the children in wet weather during play hours.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): The inspector for the district reports that all the school lobbies in Lewis have pegs for hats and clothes and that any temporary deficiency of these is made good when discovered. As regards playground shelters, opinion as to their usefulness is divided. Where they do not exist, the children are allowed to make use of the school rooms in play hours during the bad weather, an arrangement approved of by the parents as being more conducive to the comfort than taking shelter under a comfortless open shed.

Sea Fisheries (Scotland) Bill.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is now in a position to state when the Sea Fisheries (Scotland) (Application of Penalties) Bill will be taken.

MR. SINCLAIR: A day will be fixed for Second Reading as soon as there is a prospect of proceeding with the Committee stage.

Dog Poisoning in Ross-shire.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he has yet received from the police a report in regard to the numerous cases of dog poisoning in the Kilmuir and Logie districts of Ross-shire; and will he state what steps have been taken to bring the offenders to justice.

MR. SINCLAIR: I have received the report referred to by my hon. friend and am informed that the information collected has been placed in the hands of the Procurator-Fiscal.

MR. SMEATON (Stirlingshire): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that dog poisoning is also prevalent in parts of Perthshire?

MR. SINCLAIR: No, Sir.

Sanitation in the Island of Lewis.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, in view of the fact that it is upwards of two years since Dr. Dittmar, the medical inspector for the Local Government Board for Scotland, reported the sanitary condition of the Island of Lewis as dangerous to the public health, and that the Board are unable to give effect to Dr. Dittmar's recommendation for lack of funds, will he state whether the Treasury has been approached on the subject; and, if so, with what result.

I beg also to ask the Secretary for Scotland, in view of the fact that the Local Government Board for Scotland, in their Report published last year, stated that the present condition of affairs in the Island of Lewis cannot be allowed to continue, and that it is essential that there should be in the district a proper staff consisting of a medical officer of health, and at least one sanitary inspector, giving their whole time to their duties, will he state whether he can now arrange to take action in regard to this recommendation without further delay, especially bearing in mind that it is upwards of two years since the Local Government Board for Scotland received from their medical inspector, Dr. Dittmar, a Report calling attention to the deplorable sanitary condition of the townships in the island.

MR. SINCLAIR: As my hon. friend is aware, the local authority is raising and expending the full amount of its rate. I desire, if possible, to find means to enable it to do more. But this is not an easy problem. And at present I have nothing to add to my reply of 11th March.† The whole subject is having my close attention.

MR. WEIR: Has the Treasury been approached on the subject of funds?

MR. SINCLAIR: Various proposals have been discussed, but there is no definite proposal before the Treasury.

*MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): With reference to the highly insanitary character attributed by the hon. Member to his own constituency, may I ask the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board if he will consider the propriety of lending to the county council of Ross-shire the services of the medical officer of the district of Colwyn Bay?

[No Answer was returned.]

Island of Lewis Medical Officer.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that, in defiance of the opinion expressed by the Local Government Board for Scotland that it was not possible for the duties attaching to the office of chief district medical officer in the Island of Lewis to be discharged by anyone resident in Dingwall, the Lewis District Committee, at their meeting on the 26th ult., appointed a medical officer who is resident at Dingwall; and will steps be taken to see that the Board's views on the subject are not overridden by the local authority.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clxx., 1268.

MR. SINCLAIR: I am aware that the facts are as stated, and the Board are considering what steps should be taken.

Scarlet Fever at Stornoway.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that, at a recent meeting of the Stornoway Town Council Public Health Sub-Committee, a letter was read from the medical officer, stating that there is reason to believe that there are many cases of scarlet fever in the town which have not been notified, and that these cases are causing the spread of the disease throughout the community; and, in view of the insanitary condition of the Island of Lewis as reported by Dr. Dittmar, the medical inspector of the Local Government Board for Scotland, will he state what steps the Stornoway Town Council are taking to prevent the spread of the scarlet fever epidemic throughout the island.

MR. SINCLAIR: I am aware of the outbreak referred to, and the Local Government Board have been and still are in communication with the local authority as to measures taken to prevent the spread of the disease. The disease was of so mild a type that it was mistaken for a simple sore throat, and a number of cases escaped notification. The junior and infant departments of the public school were closed and will remain so for a further period of three weeks from 24th June.

Scottish School Inspectorate.

MR. SUTHERLAND (Elgin Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he can state the number of persons who have been added to the staff of the school inspectorate in Scotland for the last ten years, the proportion of those who were assistant teachers immediately before appointment, with the average number of years they taught, and the number of persons who were headmasters when they received appointments.

MR. SINCLAIR: Since 1st January, 1897, thirty-five persons, exclusive of those (four) transferred from the Science and Art Department, were added to the school inspectorate. Of these, twenty-four were serving as teachers at the time of appointment, sixteen as assistant teachers—the average length of service in their case being eight years—and eight as headmasters.

Irish Evicted Tenants.

MR. MOORE (Armagh, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will now grant the Return relating to evicted tenants in Ireland to be moved for in the name of the Member for North Armagh.

[Return. — Mr. Moore: — Evicted Tenants (Ireland).—Return showing the names and addresses of the tenants whom it is proposed to reinstate under the Evicted Tenants (Ireland) Bill, with particulars of the farms, by townlands and counties, from which they were evicted; name of landlord, and amount of arrears for which they were evicted; and the dates of such evictions.]

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): Although there would be no objection to grant a Return giving particulars of the cases of evicted tenants who have already been reinstated or provided with new holdings, it would be very undesirable to publish particulars of the cases, already stated to number about 2,000, with which it is still proposed to deal. The Estates Commissioners have expressed the strong opinion that the publication of such a Return would lead, on the one hand, to endless pressure for the inclusion of the names of persons whose applications have been refused, and, on the other hand, to long and acrimonious discussion as to the merits of particular persons whose names would appear in the Return. For these reasons the Government are not prepared to consent to the Return asked for.

Crime in King's County.

MR. MOORE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been drawn to the language of Mr. Justice Madden on the state of affairs in the King's County and the prevalence of intimidation there; and if, having regard to the fact that no verdict has been obtained in that county in agrarian cases, what steps the Government intend to take to secure an impartial trial and the vindication of the law.

MR. BIRRELL: I would refer to my Answer to the similar Question put by the hon. Member for Mid. Armagh on the 4th instant.† There was only one agrarian case for trial at the recent assizes for King's County. In that case the jury disagreed, and the accused persons are to be put on trial again.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that these remarks by Justice Madden were made not on sworn testimony or on his own inquiry or personal knowledge, but were based merely on the private reports of the constables involved, and should not, therefore, carry more weight than the words of any person passing over Westminster Bridge? Is not this a practice unknown in this country?

MR. BIRRELL: Everybody knows that the Judges of Assize are supplied with police reports in Ireland, and that they comment from time to time on what they conceive to be the state of affairs.

Mr. Larkin, J.P.

MR. MOORE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the results of his inquiry into the case of Mr. Larkin, J.P., who was under police surveillance for extradition to the United States for an offence committed there; and will he say for what offence was this man convicted at the assizes.

MR. BIRRELL: I have already informed the hon. and learned Member that Mr. Larkin was not extradited to the United States, and I have now ascertained that no application for his extradition was ever made. I can make no statement as to his having been under police surveillance with a view to extradition. Mr. Larkin was convicted at Wicklow Assizes about nineteen years ago, and sentenced to six months imprisonment upon a charge of conspiracy to compel a certain person to give up a farm.

Adare Evicted Tenant.

MR. LUNDON (Limerick, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, can he say whether the Estates Commissioners have sent an inspector to examine the claims of Thomas Drew for reinstatement in his holding at Ardshanbally, Adare, county Limerick, from which he was evicted in last September by the Earl of Dunraven; if so, what was the nature of the inspector's report; and will Mr. Drew be soon restored to his holding.

MR. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners have inquired into this case and have decided that they can take no action in it. The applicant was evicted in September, 1906, that is, more than three years after the passing of the Act of 1903, and in any event the holding is not one to which the Act applies.

Knockany Evicted Tenant.

MR. LUNDON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland is he aware that for a number of years Mr. Timothy Corbett, of Rathany, Knockany, county Limerick, has been evicted from his farm on the property of the Earl of Limerick; can he say how the Estates Commissioners' inspector, Mr. Coughlan, regarded the application for reinstatement of Mr. Corbett, as the result of his interview with him in Kilmallock on an early day in January last; and will the Estates Commissioners take steps to put Mr. Corbett back into his holding.

MR. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners have inquired into Mr. Corbett's case, and have ascertained that the holding in which he seeks to be reinstated is in the possession of his son-in-law, the husband of his only child, who has purchased it under the Land Purchase Acts. In the circumstances, the Commissioners have decided that they can take no action in the case.

Police Protection in Ireland.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what is the number of persons in Ireland to whom special protection is afforded by the constabulary, distinguishing constant protection and protection by patrols, and what is the total number of police detailed for such duty.

MR. BIRRELL: The number of persons who are receiving constant police protection is fifty, and the number receiving protection by patrols is 166. The number of police engaged in affording constant protection is about 123. The number employed in affording protection by patrols cannot be stated with accuracy. Many of the policemen so employed are also engaged on other duties, and the number varies from day to day.

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† See page 880.

Mr. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what is the number of additional police at present employed in disturbed districts in Ireland; and what are the names of such districts and the number of additional police employed in each.

Mr. BIRRELL: The number of additional police at present employed on temporary service in disturbed districts in Ireland is one district inspector, three head-constables, and 310 men. The counties and districts in which they are employed are as follows:—County Clare: districts of Ennis, Corofin, Tulla, Sixmilebridge, one head-constable and fifty-six men. County Cork, E.R.: districts of Newmarket and Midleton, seven men. Counties Cavan and Leitrim: districts of Carrick-on-Shannon and Manorhamilton, twenty-two men. County Galway, E.R.: districts of Athenry and Loughrea, seventy men. County Roscommon: districts of Roscommon, Strokestown, Castlerea, and Ballaghadereen, one district inspector, two head constables, and 133 men. King's County: district of Birr, twenty-two men.

Mr. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): How many police will be employed this week in disturbed districts in Belfast?

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): And how many were guarding the Crown jewels stolen at Dublin?

Royal Irish Constabulary.

Mr. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Government have under consideration the question of augmenting the existing establishment of Royal Irish Constabulary as fixed by Order in Council, by the issue of proclamations under the Act of 6 Will. 4, c. 13, declaring certain counties or parts of counties to be in a state of disturbance.

Mr. BIRRELL: I would refer the hon. Member to the Answer which I gave to his similar Question on 26th June.† I have nothing to add to that Answer.

Distribution of Irish Police.

Mr. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what is the number of police stations throughout Ireland that have been depleted to the extent of one, two, three men and upwards, respectively, for employment at the present time in disturbed districts.

Mr. BIRRELL: The number of police stations in Ireland from which men have been withdrawn for temporary duty in disturbed districts of other counties is eighty. One man has been withdrawn from each of seventy-five stations, and two men from each of five stations.

Dublin Constabulary Reserve.

Mr. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what is the number of men at present serving on the reserve force at the constabulary depot in Dublin whose services are available for employment in the country should the necessity for such arise; and what is the number of men constituting the reserve force at present employed in disturbed districts.

Mr. BIRRELL: The number of men of the reserve force of the Royal Irish Constabulary at present serving at the depot is 150. The number employed in disturbed districts throughout the country is 225.

Mr. KILBRIDE: Is the ex-constable who was the associate of Ex-sergeant Sheridan in the cattle-maiming in the West of Ireland still employed at the depot?

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL? And is he not the head of the swearing class?

[No Answer was returned.]

Garesbridge Evicted Tenant.

Mr. MEAGHER (Kilkenny, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if the Estates

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† See (4) *Debates*, clxxvi., 1402.

Commissioners have as yet made inquiries in the case of Philip Bolger, who was evicted from his holding on the estate of Harvey Fleming, esquire, Doninga, Garesbridge, county Kilkenny; and, if so, what steps, if any, have been taken for his restoration.

MR. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners have inquired into the case of Philip Bolger, and have decided to take no action upon his application for reinstatement. He is already in occupation of a farm of sixty-four acres.

Cavehill and Whitewell Trams, Belfast.

MR. J. DEVLIN (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a resolution passed at an extraordinary general meeting of the shareholders of the Cavehill and Whitewell Tramways Company, held at Belfast on 19th June, confirming an agreement, dated 1st May, 1907, between the company and the corporation of Belfast for the purchase by the latter of the company's tramways and their equipment, exclusive of rolling stock, together with thirty-two acres of land and a car shed, for the sum of £60,000, subject to Parliamentary sanction of the agreement; and whether, seeing that the property in question is practically valueless, and in view of local opposition to its acquisition, he will use his influence to prevent the sanction of Parliament being given to the scheme.

MR. BIRRELL: I am informed that a resolution to the effect stated has appeared in the newspapers, but the Local Government Board have not yet received a report of the company's meeting at which the resolution is stated to have been passed. It would be quite unprecedented for a Minister to give a decision hostile to a private Bill which he has not yet seen. If a Bill should be introduced, Parliament will have full opportunity for considering it.

Belfast Municipal Tramways.

MR. J. DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a report submitted to and received by the Belfast corporation from Mr. Nance, the manager of the municipal tramways, in which he recommended extensions, estimated to cost £108,000, and advised the corporation when it decided to proceed with these extensions to proceed by Order in Council instead of by Bill in Parliament, on the ground that the expense will be inconsiderable and the perils of opposition will be *nil*; whether the Privy Council has power to grant such an Order; and, if so, whether, for the protection of the ratepayers, who have not been consulted about the matter, he will insist on a local plebiscite before sanctioning such an Order, or direct that the corporation proceed by Bill in the usual way.

MR. BIRRELL: The Local Government Board have seen a copy of the report referred to in the first part of the Question. The Privy Council has full power to deal with an application for the extension of the Belfast tramways. No such application, however, has yet been made. I am advised that neither the Privy Council nor I myself have any power to direct a local plebiscite, as suggested in the Question, nor have I power to direct the Belfast corporation to proceed by Bill in Parliament. If the corporation should apply for an Order in Council, any persons who may be opposed to the application, either as representing the ratepayers or as individuals, would have full opportunity of being heard by the Council before a decision should be arrived at.

The Strike in Belfast.

MR. J. DEVLIN asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether his attention had been called to the fact that, owing to the trade dispute in Belfast and occupation of the streets by armed troops, the trade of the town was almost at a standstill; and whether, in view of the interests involved, he would send a special representative to Belfast to endeavour to bring the dispute to an end by an amicable arrangement of differences.

MR. BIRRELL: Unless invited by all parties to lend my good offices it would be foolish for me to interfere on a matter in which I have no *locus standi*. I hope an amicable settlement will shortly be arrived at.

Loans under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been drawn to a resolution passed by the North Dublin Rural District Council protesting against the *ad valorem* stamp duty, which was imposed by Section 8 of the Finance Act of 1899, being charged on the applications for loans obtained for the purpose of the Labourers (Ireland) Acts; and whether, in view of the necessity of carrying those Acts into effect to the utmost extent possible, and of the fact that the ratepayers can not only derive no profit from the provision of houses and plots of land for labourers in Ireland, but will, on the contrary, have to incur loss in respect thereof, he will consider the advisability of amending, by this year's Finance Bill, the section of the Act of 1899 referred to so as to exclude loans for the purposes of the Labourers Acts from its operation.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.): I have under consideration the inconveniences which are alleged to arise from the application of this duty in various cases analogous to that referred to in the Question. It is in any case not possible to deal with the matter in the Finance Bill of the present year.

Howth Harbour.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the attention of the Board of Works (Ireland) has been called to the condition of the royal harbour of Howth, county of Dublin, which is rapidly becoming filled with sand; whether the Board is bound to maintain this harbour in a state of efficiency, and whether it has a dredger immediately available and suitable for use at Howth; and, if so, whether immediate steps will be taken to prevent the harbour from becoming useless for fishing and other boats.

MR. RUNCIMAN: It is the case, I understand, that large quantities of sand are deposited in Howth Harbour by the action of the tides; but the Board of Works inform me that by regular dredging they maintain it in a suitable condition for the fishing boats and other vessels which use it. During the year 1906–7 the Board's dredger raised 8,600 tons of spoil.

MR. CLANCY: Does the hon. Gentleman consider the harbour in a proper state now?

MR. RUNCIMAN: I cannot say, but I will inquire.

MR. CLANCY: That is the very Question I had on the Paper.

Hague Conference.

MR. BOWLES (Lambeth, Norwood): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether His Majesty's Government has authorised the British representative at The Hague Conference to propose or to agree to the abandonment by Great Britain of the right of a belligerent to capture contraband of war at sea; whether His Majesty's Government has authorised him to propose or to agree to the abandonment of the right to capture an enemy's private property at sea or to agree to any condition that if captured it shall not enure to the Crown but shall only be sequestrated and returned to the enemy at the end of the war; and whether he will undertake that, before the abandonment of any of the rights of maritime warfare belonging to Great Britain, the question of their abandonment or retention shall be submitted to a decision of this House.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Conference having reserved to itself a discretion as to what information should be published respecting its deliberations, I cannot anticipate such publication. Should any decisions be arrived at which require legislation they would, of course, have to be submitted to Parliament, but I cannot give any pledge with regard to other decisions at any rate till it is known what they are.

The Government and the Bounty Question.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether the statement in the despatch to His Majesty's Minister at Brussels respecting the International Sugar Convention, to the effect that His Majesty's Government have no desire that there should be a revival of sugar bounties, was intended as a general declaration of policy with regard to bounties; and whether the objection here expressed to sugar bounties given by foreign countries is to be accepted as also applying to shipping bounties provided at the expense of this country.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: My hon. friend will see, if he turns to the despatch, that the declaration in question was concerned with sugar bounties alone. The attitude of His Majesty's Government towards bounties in general is, I think, very well known to my hon. friend, and there is no reason, so far as I am aware, why I should enter into the question now.

"All-red" Route.

MR. HAROLD COX: I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether he will call the attention of the Ministerial Committee now engaged in considering proposals for an all-red route to the declaration of policy made by himself on 27th March, to the effect that the Government were no advocates of subsidised services of this kind where an absolute equivalent for the money spent was not received.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have no doubt the Committee are aware of that recent expression of opinion from which I have no desire to recede.

Black Rod's Messages.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL asked the Speaker whether some arrangement could be made with the officials of the other House whereby business would not be suspended by the arrival of Black Rod. On Thursday there was an exceptional instance of the inconvenience caused, when, the House being in Committee, the proceedings were interrupted, the Chairman left the chair, the Speaker was recalled, and a very interesting speech had to be suspended [a laugh]—yes, a very interesting speech—until, after the return of the Speaker, the Chairman could return to the chair. This difficulty had occurred before, and in 1891 Mr. Speaker Peel, in reply to Mr. Labouchere, said some arrangement should be made to prevent unnecessary interruption of business. Opposed as he was to the use of strong language, he did not like to repeat what Mr. Labouchere said of the "invasion" of the House by Black Rod.

*MR. SPEAKER: I quite agree with the hon. Member that it is inconvenient to have business interrupted by the delivery of a message by Black Rod, and I have always endeavoured, so far as I have any share in fixing the time, to have the message delivered at a time most convenient for business. I will make further inquiry, and see if it is possible to avoid interruption of business. It sometimes happens that it is necessary or desirable to get the Royal Assent to a Bill rapidly, and, if so, it is rather difficult to find a time at which the business of the House would not be interrupted for a short time. But I will put myself into communication with the authorities of the other House, and try to arrange the time for the delivery of the message.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they have discharged the following Member from Standing Committee A (in respect of the Petty Sessions Clerks (Ireland) Bill): Mr. Secretary Gladstone; and had appointed in substitution (in respect of the Petty Sessions Clerks (Ireland) Bill): Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland.

Report to lie upon the Table.

TELEGRAPH (MONEY BILL.

Reported, with Amendments, from Standing Committee B.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 243.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 243.]

Bill, as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be taken into consideration To-morrow, and to be printed [Bill 268.]

EVIDENCE (COLONIAL STATUTES) BILL.

Reported, without Amendment, from Standing Committee B.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 244.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 244.]

Bill [not amended] to be taken into consideration To-morrow.

RADIOTELEGRAPHIC CONVENTION.

Report from the Select Committee, with Minutes of Evidence, brought up, and read.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 246.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (EVICTED TENANTS (IRELAND) BILL).

Motion made, and Question put, "That the proceedings on the Second Reading of the Evicted Tenants (Ireland) Bill, if under discussion at Eleven o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order (Sittings of the House):"—(*Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.*)

The House divided: Ayes, 234; Noes, 46. (Division List No. 270.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Alden, Percy
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Ambrose, Robert
Asquith, Rt. Hon Herbert Henry
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Barry, Redmond J. (Tyrone, N.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Bellairs, Carlyon
Bethell, Sir J. H. (Essex, Romf'rd
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Billson, Sir Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Boland, John
Boulton, A. C. F.
Branch, James
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Bryce, J. Annan
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Chance, Frederick William
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Clancy, John Joseph
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, C. H. (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cox, Harold
Crean, Eugene
Crooks, William
Cullinan, J.
Davies, Mr. Vaughan- (Cardigan
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Devlin, Joseph

Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dewar, Sir J. A. (Inverness-sh.)
Dickinson, W. H. (St. Pancras, N.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. Martin (Walsall
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Essex, R. W.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Everett, R. Lacey
Ferens, T. R.
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alexander
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fuller, John Michael F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Gooch, George Peabody
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Rt Hn. Sir W. Brampton
Gwynn, Stephen Lucius
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hart-Davies, T.
Harwood, George
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hedges, A. Paget
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hodge, John
Hogan, Michael
Holland, Sir William Henry
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.

Jacoby, Sir James Alfred
Jones, Sir D. Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh A. (Donegal, W.)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lea, Hugh Cecil (St. Pancras, E.
Lehmann, R. C.
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Maclean, Donald
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Killop, W.
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick A.
Menzies, Walter
Molteno, Percy Alport
Mond, A.
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murnaghan, George
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nicholson, Charles N. (Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nugent, Sir Walter Richard
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.

Parker, James (Halifax)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pearson,Sir W. D. (Colchester)
Pearson,W.H.M. (Suffolk, Eye)
Perks, Robert William
Philipps,J.Wynford (Pembroke
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price,RobertJohn (Norfolk, E.)
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Richards,T.F.(Wolverhampton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Robertson,Rt. Hn. E. (Dundee)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smyth, Thomas F. (Leitrim,S.)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanley,Hn. A. Lyulph(Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Sutherland, J. E.
Tennant,Sir Edward(Salisbury)
Thomas,Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wardle, George J.
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
Wason,John Cathcart (Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Weir, James Galloway
Whitbread, Howard
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Williamson, A.
Wilson, J.W.(Worcestersh., N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Acland-Hood,Rt.Hn.SirAlexF.
Ashley, W. W.
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour,RtHn.A.J. (CityLond.)
Banbury,SirFrederick George
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry,N.)
Bowles, G. Stewart
Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. H. M.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, Rt.Hon.VictorC.W.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig,Charles Curtis(Antrim,S.)
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duncan,Robert (Lanark,Govan
Fell, Arthur
Gordon, J.
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heaton, John Henniker
Helmsley, Viscount
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Kennaway,Rt.Hon. Sir JohnH.
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Long,Rt.Hn.Walter(Dublin,S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Middlemore,John Throgmorton
Moore, William
Parker, Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Pease,HerbertPike(Darlington)
Randles, Sir John Scurrah
Remnant, James Farquharson
Ronaldshay, Earl of
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Sheffield,Sir BerkeleyGeorge D.
Smith,Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Thornton, Percy M.
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Lord Edmund Talbot and Mr. Forster.

FINANCE (LOCAL TAXATION GRANTS).

Resolution reported: "That if the rate of duty on any local taxation licence (including any duty charged under Subsection (1) of Section 8 of the Locomotives on Highways Act, 1896) is hereafter increased, there shall be added to the amounts payable to the local taxation account out of the Consolidated Fund such sums (if any) as may be required to bring the amount payable in any year to the local taxation account up to the amount which would have been payable if the proceeds of that duty in that year were taken to be the average proceeds of the duty for three years ending March the thirty-first, nineteen hundred and seven, and if the sum ascertained to have been collected in that year in any county in England in respect of that duty were taken to be the average sum so ascertained to have been collected for the three years ending March the thirty-first, nineteen hundred and seven."

SIR F. BANBURY (City of London), said he did not happen to be present in the House the previous Friday when this Resolution was moved in Committee, without, as far as he could ascertain, any explanation having been given or demanded. As a consequence all they had heard about the matter was the statement which had just been read by the Clerk of the Table, which he felt certain that no one had been able to make head or tail of. He gathered that what the Resolution meant was that under the Finance Bill the Chancellor of the Exchequer had made alterations in local taxation, and that the Resolution was necessary to carry them out. He did not know whether or not he was right in supposing that; nor did he know whether it was the result of a pledge the right hon. Gentleman had given to the Leader of the Opposition during the discussion on the Budget. However, he would venture to suggest that the House should have a full explanation of what the Resolution meant so that hon. Members might know what they were voting for.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.) said that if the hon. Baronet had read his Parliamentary Papers of last Friday, he would have found the Resolution set out in them. He had had three days in which to study and define it, so that he (Mr. Asquith) failed to see that the hon. Gentleman had any grievance of any sort or kind. The Resolution was in pursuance of a pledge he had given to the Leader of the Opposition, viz., that if licence duties were increased, the Government would take care that local bodies should not suffer, but receive a sum similar to that which they had received on an average for the past three years.

Resolution agreed to.

EVICTED TENANTS (IRELAND) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. MOORE (Armagh, N.) moved that the Bill be read a second time upon that day three months. He said that, while Unionists were as anxious as any one not to disturb the *eirenikon* established by the Land Purchase Act, it did not follow that the objections entertained to the extraordinary and revolutionary proposals in the nature of machinery contained in this Bill should not be placed before the House. The hon. Member for North Louth had appealed to Unionists not to pursue their irreconcilable attitude towards the evicted tenants. But any reasonable man must find himself very seriously opposed to the extraordinary proposals in the nature of machinery—which were practically revolutionary—contained in this Bill. Several times during the last thirteen years the House had had before it legislation dealing with the position of evicted tenants. At the present time they had in force the legislative powers under the Act of 1903, which he hoped to convince the House would solve the problem if allowed to be worked out. As the opposition was coming from the Unionist Benches, perhaps he might be allowed to point out that it was by Unionist legislation that the House had the means at its hand to deal with the situation. A clear, convincing, and overwhelming case should be brought before the House and proved to its satisfaction, before it invested a body in which Ireland had little confidence with extraordinary and arbitrary powers of acquiring land compulsorily, of fixing their own price, and of leaving the matter without the possibility of appeal from their decision. The Estates Commissioners had published a Report, and he wished to ask the attention of the House to the conclusions which could legitimately be drawn from that Report. Nobody, he thought, would deny that there was not the least chance of the Commissioners understating the case with regard to evicted tenants. The Report was conceived and prepared in that spirit, he had no doubt. Let the House consider what it meant, because it was only by dealing with the results of what had been done in Ireland in this matter that they could form an opinion as to whether existing legislation was adequate. In the Report which the Estates Commissioners had submitted to the House it would be found that they had received 8,400 claims for reinstatement from tenants. Of these 8,400, the Commissioners had found that little over 3,000 were what he might call *bona fide*. When, therefore, it was found that only about 36 per cent. of the claims were *bona fide* he thought it threw a very strong light upon the question of the size and magnitude of the problem which had to be dealt with. Thirty-six per cent. of the whole of the claims were in the opinion of the Commissioners from persons who were entitled to be reinstated. That only applied to the applications received since the passing of the Land Act of 1903. Of those 3,000 cases under the voluntary system now in force they had already reinstated 1,000 tenants, so that it might be taken that 33 per. cent. of the genuine cases had been reinstated in three and a half years by the Estates Commissioners. He would put it to any fair-minded man whether the Commissioners could have done more in three and a half years had they had compulsory powers in 1903 than had already been done under the voluntary system. The Report dealt only with the work the Estates Commissioners had done since 1903. It certified that there were 2,000 cases to be dealt with. Before the Act of 1903 there was a mutual feeling between all parties concerned in Ireland. Landlord and tenant were sick of the business, and there had been during the past seven or eight years a marked tendency on both sides to come to terms. A general process of voluntary re-instatement had been going on before the Act of 1903 was passed. The Report of the Commissioners on the subject in that year, showed that there were seventeen estates in which tenants had been evicted in connection with the Plan of Campaign. But a recent Report stated that of these evictions in nine cases the tenants had been reinstated in 1903. No suggestion of unfairness was made at the time or during the passing of the Act of 1903, and he did not think the House would now consider what were the terms on which the men were reinstated. They were reinstated in a voluntary manner without any compulsion, and he submitted it ought not to be questioned now. With regard to the Plan of Campaign estates the result at present was that out of the seventeen Plan of Campaign estates there were only two in which the question had not been settled, and out of a total of 1,580 original Plan of Campaign tenants there were only 160 who were not in possession of holdings. That had been done by voluntary agreement, either before or after the passing of the Act of 1903, and when it had come down to a mere matter of 160, so far as the Plan of Campaign tenants were concerned, he did not think a case had been made out which would justify the application of the compulsory powers proposed by the Bill. He wished to say how much he protested against the policy of secrecy which the Government had adopted. No one in Ireland except the members of the United Irish League had any idea who had been selected by the Estates Commissioners to fill the 2,000 vacancies. When this Bill had become an Act they would be told that it was a settlement of the whole question. He would suggest to the Chief Secretary or whoever replied for the Government that if the Bill was not a settlement of the whole question he would still more protest against the giving of compulsory powers. If it was to be a settlement of the whole question they had a definition of the class of evicted tenants who were to be reinstated, and their names ought to be published. The House ought to know who they were. The men themselves were entitled to know, but according to an answer given by the Chief Secretary they were not entitled to know whether their claims were accepted or not. The Mathew Commission reported on the evicted tenants and in the Blue-books set out the names of the evicted tenants who had made claims before them. If this was to be a settlement, in justice to the tenants and the people who were to be dispossessed of their land, if the Bill became law the taxpayers had a right to know who were the people for whose benefit this extraordinary legislation was carried through the House. But the Government were determined that that should not be the case. Day after day the Question Paper contained Questions as to what was to be the fate of a tenant in this or that county, but no communication was made. The only people who seemed to know what was to be done in any particular case were the members of the United Irish League. He knew a reliable case where a landlord was approached and asked what he would do in regard to some tenants whom he had evicted some time ago. He gave full particulars in regard to eight of them. He gave reasons why five would be eligible for reinstatement and three would not be eligible. He had never been allowed to know what the Commissioners were going to do in the matter, and the evicted tenants had not been allowed to know. But at a meeting of the United Irish League held in his village the actual terms of his letter were quoted by a speaker of the League which showed how very intimate was the bond between them and the inspectors employed by the Estates Commissioners, or the Estates Commissioners themselves, when information of that nature was communicated to the local body and denied to everybody else. [A NATIONALIST MEMBER: Who was the landlord?] He did not want the unfortunate man to be either boycotted or shot, and he should certainly refuse to give his name. The House might accept his statement or not as it pleased. This policy of secrecy, this fear of disclosing the names, was apt to make Members anxious to scrutinise very closely the means by which these 2,000 names had been arrived at. There had been inquiries all over the country behind the backs of the people interested, and no information had been vouchsafed to them. He thought in common protection to the rights of minorities and the rights of individuals, and in all fair play, the names of the 2,000 eligible tenants should be put forward instead of the House being confronted with the interminable prospect of having Bills to deal with the residue brought forward year after year. Quite apart from these reasons he would be rather disposed to doubt the finding of the Commissioners that there were 2,000 genuine claims. He said that after careful persual of the speeches made in the House time after time for the last thirteen years by hon. Members below the Gangway, and they would never be able to clear away such doubts until they had the names and particulars of the tenants whom they now sought to reinstate. They were told that 80,000 acres of land would be required for the purpose. Putting it at the lowest figure they would not get it much cheaper, or at any rate they ought not to get it much cheaper, than £25 an acre. That would be a very low figure, and from what he knew of the tenants not one of them would be satisfied with land below that figure. That involved £2,000,000 of money. He did not suggest that that was capital expenditure, but it was an advance of money for which the British taxpayer was ultimately responsible. It was a sum of such magnitude that he thought they could not lightly pass over the creation of such an obligation without very definite information as to the persons for whom it was wanted. In addition to that they were told that there was to be a money grant for the purpose of stocking, furnishing, and fitting these 80,000 acres, or so much as might be required by the Estates Commissioners, for taking them over. He thought it would be a reasonable estimate to say that for these 2,000 the sum of £150 would be required in each case from the Estates Commissioners. That was a matter of another £300,000. So far as he could make out, of the £2,000,000 which was to be advanced, £250,000 would be a loss, or would certainly be treated as a loss. It would be in the nature of a grant towards the acquisition of land. The evicted tenants would only be asked to pay £1,750,000. When the holdings had been stocked it would be found that £250,000 was also a free grant, so that the upshot was that this would involve £2,750,000 of public money, and there would be an actual expenditure which the country could never expect to see again of at least £500,000. When they were going to give away that sum they had a right to know who were the people for whom the expenditure was intended, and how the names were arrived at. If any hon. Member stood up and said that these people were entitled to the money merely because two of the Estates Commissioners, who unfortunately they happened to know a good deal about, had chosen to recommend it, it would be necessary to give more information before any conscientious man would consent to allow such a large sum to be diverted for their benefit. In 1894, the then Chief Secretary brought in a Bill dealing with the evicted tenants in Ireland and stated that £100,000 would settle the question. He drew attention to that figure, to show how enormously the number had been magnified for the purpose of this Bill. The unhappy contest when the tenants were evicted took place long before 1894. He did not think it would be contended that there had been many evictions in Ireland since 1894. The Chief Secretary in that year estimated that the total number of all sorts and conditions of evicted tenants be dealt with by the Bill at not exceeding 4,000. He would ask the House to remember what had happened in the nine years between the passing of the Act of 1894 and the Act of 1903, and how the figures had subsequently been dealt with, because, he thought, he would be able to satisfy the House that the 2,000 tenants, the number which the Estates Commissioners had arrived at in the secret chamber inquiry, must necessarily be grossly exaggerated if they were dealing with *bona fide* evicted tenants. The Nationalist Members prevailed on the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Montrose Burghs, who was then Chief Secretary, to increase the sum to £250,000. They claimed a great deal of credit for doing so, but he did not think it was difficult to get a Liberal Government dependent on their votes to give them anything. At any rate they were entitled to the credit, such as it was. He would not trouble the House by going into the Bill of 1896, except that it proposed to proceed on voluntary lines. The sum then asked was also £250,000. The Bill was supported by hon. Members below the Gangway as being adequate, but it did not go further. Then, in 1899, a Bill was introduced by the hon. Member for the Connemara Division of Galway. It threw a clear light on what the actual number of evicted tenants might be taken to be at that time. He said there were then 600 evicted tenants in Ireland, 400 of whom were Plan of Campaign tenants and 200 who were evicted generally on other grounds. Mr. Michael Davitt, who was certainly an enthusiast on the subject, speaking in the same debate, said he differed from those figures and thought 1,000 would be nearer the number. That was the only difference between them, and the Bill of 1899 dealt with every class of tenants. The then Chief Secretary, Mr. Gerald Balfour, took part in the debate, and stated that the total number of evicted tenants in 1899 could be taken at the figure of 1,000, thereby agreeing with Mr. Davitt. Could anyone suppose that the number of 1,000 had grown into 3,000 between 1899 and 1903, when the Land Act was passed? He ignored the bogus claims of 5,000, which had been too much even for the Estates Commissioners. That Bill also asked for £250,000. It seemed immaterial whether the number went up or down. Next year—1900—another Bill was brought in by the hon. Member for one of the divisions of Cork, and he only asked for £100,000. He also dealt with all classes of evicted tenants, and he explained to the House that he only asked for £100,000 because of the diminished number of such persons. He was supported by the hon. and learned Member for Waterford, who said that on the last occasion when the Bill was before the House the number of evicted tenants was estimated at 600, and that since then it had very considerably decreased. Later on, in one of the debates on the Land Bill of 1903 the hon. Member for East Mayo—whose absence, and its cause, he deplored—said that in 1894 there were about 800 of these people, but that half of them had disappeared—some of them had emigrated, some had been resettled, and some had died—so that there were only 400 families to be dealt with, and that the whole question could be disposed of for £200,000 in a way which would strike the imagination of Ireland and smooth the passage of the Bill. Yet three and a half years from that time the obedient majority of the Estates Commissioners discovered that there were 3,000 to be compensated at an expense to the British taxpayer of nearly £750,000. More investigation was clearly required, and he submitted that the only way in which it could be done was by putting an end to secrecy and intrigue, and putting on paper in black and white the names of those whose claims the Estates Commissioners regarded as well founded. He had shown, he contended, from these facts and figures that the problem at the present moment had been magnified, that for years past it had been diminishing, and that a settlement was rapidly being arrived at by voluntary means. That wiped away altogether the necessity for the compulsory powers which the present proposals included. He thought it an extravagant idea to assume that every tenant in Ireland who had been evicted, and was to be reinstated, was to receive an average holding of forty acres. Remembering that in district after district in Ireland people had to live on fifteen, twenty, or twenty-five acres, it was a monstrous thing to start the reinstatement of evicted tenants with average holdings of forty acres apiece. He could not imagine anything which would create such dissatisfaction. The dissatisfaction in England at the palaces which the Local Government Board system provided for paupers would be nothing to the dissatisfaction of the small farmer who had fulfilled his own obligations and paid his own rent, on finding an evicted tenant in his neighbourhood getting forty acres, and a present of £150 at least to stock his land. There would be a revolution amongst these people. Again, if they gave the evicted tenant forty acres they would be not indemnifying him, but rewarding him, and the present was least of all the time when it would be desirable to put a premium on evictions. The State had provided sixty-five millions of British money and had made itself to that extent landlords in Ireland. One of the best securities of the landlord, if instalments were repudiated, was to come down on the holding when default was made. Yet they were setting these people up with the idea that to be evicted was a virtue, that eviction was done with in Ireland, that in future they either would never be evicted, or that if evicted they would be besought to come back again, and given 100 acres next time. He did not think the House should act in any grudging manner, but at the same time they ought not so to act as to imperil the security for the advance of which they were the trustees. They ought to act with economy, without throwing money away on undeserving persons, of whom he was perfectly satisfied there were a large number, and without endowing evicted tenants unreasonably and beyond their law-respecting neighbours. The personal character of the applicants was always looked into, and was part of the security— the probability of how far by his personal efforts he would be able to carry out the arrangement on which the State made him the advance. He did not wish in a spirit of bitterness to look into the history of these evicted tenants, but the fact remained that they had been unable to meet their obligations, or had repudiated them. In such cases if they looked into personal character they would require more security than with a man who had always met his obligations. He thought also that a proposal which must imply an advance of £2,000,000 would be regarded as a very serious matter by those who were at present looking for the completion of contracts under the land purchase scheme. The Land Act of 1903 proceeded on the basis that it was to effect the conversion of the entire tenanted land of Ireland, and it was estimated that £100,000,000 would be sufficient for that purpose, leaving out the question of bonus. It might be desirable to settle the evicted tenants' question, but where land was to be acquired for that end he claimed it was not legitimate land purchase. They were, in fact, filching from the £100,000,000 provided for the Land Act £2,000,000, and placing it on one side for an object which, however deserving, was not land purchase. If the Government had wished to carry this scheme through with fair play to those who had signed agreements for land purchase they would have provided the £2,000,000 from other sources, without building a wall across the path of land purchase. He asked the House to look how they stood at the present moment. There were agreements signed for £30,000,000. One would imagine that when the State guaranteed that money should be forthcoming to complete these transactions they would be completed in an ordinary time. The Estates Commissioners, however, seemed unable to complete the work which they had in hand. They had agreements for 1904 in their office, and were unable to complete them, and notwithstanding this fact the Chancellor of the Exchequer stated that it was not contemplated to make any further issue of land stock which would enable the Government to carry out their arrangements with the tenant purchasers. The Chief Secretary also contemplated stealing £2,000,000 from the Irish Purchase Fund to complete the expenditure on evicted tenants. He wished to ask whether the evicted tenants question was to be settled at once and whether this £2,000,000 would be provided immediately. If that was to be done the Government would be giving the evicted tenants a priority over legitimate tenant purchasers which they did not deserve. Not only was the £2,000,000 to be taken from the capital value, but one of the funds necessary to the working of the Act—the Reserve Fund—was to be drawn upon for the expenses of the Estate Commissioners in respect to evicted tenants. If the Government exhausted the Reserve Fund for the sake of evicted tenants they would bring themselves into instant collision with every local authority in Ireland, and the ratepayers had a right to be considered before the Government were generous at their expense. He would like to say a few words with regard to the question of compulsory powers. He reminded the House that the law as it stood was exactly as it would have been if the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose Burghs had become law in 1894. In 1894 the right hon. Gentleman said that he could settle the whole question by voluntary methods if he were given the money. At present the law was that the voluntary method was to be resorted to, and under the Land Purchase Acts the Estates Commissioners had unlimited control in regard to money. They were, therefore, in exactly the same position as if the right hon. Gentleman's Bill had become law. Under these circumstances the Liberal Party, following the lead of the right hon. Gentleman, pledged themselves against compulsory interference with tenants who had come into the possession of land from which tenants had been evicted, and made it a *sine qua non* that tenants who had come in on evicted tenants holdings were not to be evicted. The Liberal Party assented to that proposition; they on their part had also assented to it in 1903, and it was part and parcel of the *concordat* that was arrived at. When the right hon. Gentleman introduced his Bill in 1894 the eviction of existing holders was not then demanded by the Nationalist Members, and in the course of the discussion on the Bill of 1903 the hon. and learned Member for Waterford referred to the Bill of 1894 as giving them in substance all they asked for for evicted tenants. The hon. and learned Gentleman said repeatedly in 1903 that evictions should not be made to make room for evicted tenants, and, therefore, in his judgment, the compulsory powers of the Bill before the House were in breach of the agreement arrived at in 1903. Colonel Saunderson, speaking on the same occasion, said that he was ready, and he believed the landlords of Ireland were ready, as far as possible, to see the evicted tenants reinstated, so long as that did not involve the eviction of the present holders. After that, the hon. Member for East Mayo said that the eviction of the present holders had not been demanded by the Nationalist Members, and he asked whether they made no concession when they retired from the position which the whole people of Ireland had taken up in saying that these men should be evicted. That was the honourable understanding against compulsion on which the Act of 1903 was passed, but now this Bill containing compulsory powers was brought forward. The landlords had carried out their part of that agreement. [NATIONALIST MEMBERS: Certainly not.] That was the first time he had heard that, and he thought the House would require some evidence of it. If they were to turn out these men, who on the faith of the Bill of 1903 became holders, it would be a gross breach of Parliamentary usage, and not consistent with the record of hon. Gentlemen below the gangway. It would be a monstrous thing if at this time of day these despotic Estates Commissioners were armed with powers to effect that. If peace was desired in Ireland—and they wished for it—it was not a hopeful position that these tenants were to be made the victims of hon. Members below the gangway and a large Parliamentary majority. If that were done it would only begin the strife again, and the action would never be forgotten. There was no provision in the Bill for compulsory powers which suggested that anyone should get a fair price. In ordinary cases, and under ordinary public Acts, when a man had property taken from him, there was a provision for obtaining for him a fair price. There was no such suggestion here. There was no principle which gave rise to more annoyance than that of pre-emption. Under the Act of 1881, which gave the landlords the right to acquire the tenants' interest, that system was objected to and repudiated by the Nationalist Members, although the values were fixed by the Land Commissioners. Pre-emption was not good enough for hon. Members or their constituents, but it was quite good enough for the new tenant who, against all Parliamentary precedent, was to be evicted. He thought that threw the strongest side-light on the scope and intention of the Bill. The value was to be fixed by the Estates Commissioners, and then there was to be an appeal to the Estates Commissioners from themselves. That was not equal justice; it appeared to be like appealing from Philip drunk to Philip sober. There was no means of checking the Commissioners or rectifying their judgments if they were wrong—even if they were deliberately wrong. In the first place they were to decide who was an evicted tenant, and they could then proceed to evict any tenant they liked in Ireland replace the evicted tenant, and fix the price to be paid. There was no provision against their entering upon demesne and residential land, and finding that it was not land of that character. In the case of an unpopular owner there was no appeal. The Estates Commissioners looked for their policy to the *Freeman's Journal*, and took their orders from the brotherhood of the United Irish League. It was proposed that the property of decent law-abiding people in Ireland, and of people who had rendered themselves obnoxious to the United Irish League, either by serving on juries or in other ways, should be placed at the mercy of the Estates Commissioners, which was the central branch of an organisation for intimidating and driving out these men. The majority of the Estates Commissioners were absolutely disqualified by their partisan action from being considered to have the reputation of an impartial tribunal by any section of the public who wished to submit a case to them. The Act of 1903 provided two methods of sale. One was sale through the Estates Commissioners and the other was direct sale from the landlord to the tenant. He put it to those conversant with the facts, Was there any member of the public anxious to sell who was willing to trust the Estate Commissioners with the power of selling an estate? The Act contained another course. It provided by Section 22 in case of dispute between landlord and tenant, that the Estates Commissioners were to have the power of acting as judges with the consent of both parties. How many parties in Ireland would allow the Estates Commissioners to exercise such powers? There was not a man in Ireland at the present time who would be such a fool as to place himself in the hands of the Estates Commissioners. And that was the tribunal which the right hon. Gentleman proposed to invest with these extraordinary powers. The thing was monstrous.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR IRELAND (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): Who appointed them?

MR. MOORE could understand the thirst for information of the hon. Gentleman, and his desire to be informed of all the changes, because he noticed on looking through the division lists on these Evicted Tenants Bills that he voted against every one of them. He was then sitting in Opposition, and adopted in 1894 the then Chief Secretary's determination that there should be no compulsory powers. Had he changed his views since, and was he going to support the compulsory powers in this Bill?

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL said he could support compulsion on a great deal larger area than this Bill.

MR. MOORE was not discussing what the hon. Member could do, but what he had done. He was an intimate friend of one of these Estates Commissioners, and no doubt was a little nettled at the truth told about these gentlemen. He would forgive him his heat.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: You have not answered my question, Who appointed them?

MR. MOORE said that if this Bill were worked properly some other tribunal must be obtained than the Estates Commissioners, who were not a judicial but an administrative body and were admittedly unable to overtake their work. These additional duties if thrown upon them would be performed in a partisan manner owing to the environment in which they had placed themselves. The machinery of the Bill should be altered, the appeal should be removed from the Commissioners, and a Judge of the High Court should deal with the matter. When they considered the tenure of office of these gentlemen, they perceived the real object of the Bill. The plan had been devised by the two Commissioners who were not on the Consolidated Fund, in order that they might be put in the position of County Court Judges. It amounted to this, that no matter what they did, they were to be absolutely permanent in their tenure, and that House would lose all control over them. That would be most unfortunate. The hon. Member for Waterford in 1903 had insisted upon their being subject to the criticisms of that House. He could see no advantage, but positive disadvantage was to be feared by that section, and he hoped the good sense of the House would not allow the clause to become law. In conclusion he would say that if the Estates Commissioners would only devote themselves to their legitimate work, abandon the mesh of intrigue in which they were daily wrapped up, deal with priority, so as not necessarily to put the evicted tenants or cases laid before them by the priests first; if they would try and gain some of the public confidence they had deservedly lost and allow the evicted tenants question to be disposed of as it had been during the last few years, one-tenth of the evicted tenants' claims having been settled in three years, then there would be no necessity for compulsion; while if compulsion were granted it should only be under such safeguards as would secure justice for all parties concerned. He moved the rejection of the Bill.

*MR. BARRIE (Londonderry, N.), in seconding the Amendment, said he desired to point out to the House the special significance of the introduction of such a highly controversial measure in the last month of the session. The programme of the Government at the commencement of the session contained no fewer than thirteen Bills—an unlucky number. Of these, several had never been introduced. Another had been introduced and dropped. And in connection with one Bill there was a point he desired to emphasise. Perhaps the most important measure of the session—the Central Council Bill—was dropped at the request of the Dublin Convention of the United Irish League. That Bill had been introduced at the request of the same Party. There was an extremely close connection between them which was not without special and peculiar significance. Why, when other promised measures were not brought forward, was this Bill introduced at this period of the session? The Government now promised it should be placed on the Statute-book this session and they had already seen how quick the Government was to obey the mandate of the United Irish League as represented by hon. Members below the gangway. It was just possible that if the conflict at Jarrow had taken place a few weeks earlier this would not have occurred. The Nationalist Party always over-rated their strength, as the recent election had again proved, but that had not yet been sufficiently realised by the Government as to encourage them to resist the pressure brought upon them. This was a Bill brought in to reinstate what were termed the evicted tenants. These were of these different classes. He would have great sympathy with evicted tenants who had met with honest misfortune and fallen upon evil days. He had none with the No Rent Campaign tenants. This was a new form of legislation. They had it on record that these evicted tenants were men who were able to pay rent. He would quote from the words of the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon)—whose absence he regretted and also the reason for it—

> "These evicted tenant campaigners are men who can pay and will not pay because I tell them not to pay."

Such was the class for whom the House was asked to pass very special legislation. A certain class of persons in Ireland were ready to take advantage of every opportunity of mulcting the British taxpayer. They knew how rapidly the number of alleged evicted tenants had been added to since there was a prospect of their being reinstated. Let it not be forgotten that although that number had been steadily increasing, a new army last year came forward of not less than 1,457. There had been presented altogether 8,401 claims for reinstatement. It was perfectly clear that many of these were of a purely bogus character. Fully 5,000 had already been rejected, and it was very evident that if a really impartial tribunal investigated the claims of the 3,200 which remained a very large further number would be struck off. There was another provision of the Bill which he and his friends thought most objectionable and that was the provision for evicting new tenants who had taken possession of farms from which other tenants had been previously evicted. Under the Bill it was possible for a tenant who had been twenty-eight years on a farm, and who had during that long period always paid his rent and taxes, to be evicted on six months notice from his farm in order to give place to a farmer who at one time or another had forfeited the holding, but who was at the expense of the State to be provided with a new farm or have his old farm re-provided for him, even though it involved the throwing of an honest man into the roadway. That was far-reaching legislation, and even the present Government would find it difficult to persuade their followers to place it on the Statute-book. As regarded the terms in which these clauses were put into the Land Act of 1903, the hon. and learned

Gentleman for Waterford had then stated that the matter only affected a handful of men, but there had evidently been a very considerable advance in his ideas since then. And, again, Mr. Dillon had said that he did not suppose there were more than 1,000 or 2,000 acres in dispute. That was only four years ago, and now they had a report presented by the Estates Commissioners stating that it would require 80,000 acres to conclude a settlement, even though a great deal had been done in the meantime. These were the demands they were asked to meet in that Bill, and they were asked to leave the whole matter in the hands of three gentlemen. He did not care what might be the standing or qualification of the Estates Commissioners, it was an absolutely new principle that three men should be empowered to fix the price at which they should buy compulsorily and also the price at which they should sell. That was a novel proposal and one which it would be the duty of Unionists to resist to the utmost of their power. As to the cost of reinstatement, £218 per farm was the calculation which had been made. He ventured to say that fully £500,000 would be required before the whole work of stocking on the liberal scale proposed was done. The hon. Member for South Tyrone said, in answer to his hon. and learned friend when he was challenged for having voted against all measures in this direction in previous years, that he was in favour of a larger compulsory purchase than this. The hon. Member for South Tyrone was not alone in advocating that policy. There were Members on the Unionist side of the House who had already said clearly that that must be the final solution of the 1903 Act. He would also remind the hon. Member for South Tyrone that he had secured his return to that House at the last general election by a pledge to introduce a Bill for that specific purpose. That Bill was now four months overdue. He ventured to ask the hon. Member for South Tyrone, now that he was in the secrets of the Government and held an honourable position among them, why he had not informed his colleagues how he was embarrassed by that promise before he took office recently, and why the Government did not now bring in the larger measure which the hon. Gentleman had led the farmers of the North of Ireland to expect would be introduced. He would remind the House that the effect of pernicious legislation of this kind was to lead honourable men who regularly paid their rents to put to themselves this question: "Does honesty pay; because we find that men who refused to pay their rents when so requested by their masters are now to be better done by; they are to be put on a footing which they could never have hoped for if they had wanted to be honest men?" The Chief Secretary, he submitted, was bound to consider that aspect of the question. The greatest responsibility attached to his office, and he thought that when the right hon. Gentleman reflected that the Bill could not truthfully be described as a moral bill, because it was putting a premium on dishonesty, he should remember that in the present state of Ireland he was hardly justified in bringing forward legislation which was bound to have such a detrimental effect so far as honest rate-paying farmers were concerned. He believed that a further injury would be done by the Bill in the additional delay it would cause to the settlement of estates already sold under the great Land Act of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover. Many Members of the House would agree that there was great dissatisfaction at the slow progress being made with the settlement of estates during the last three or four years. He would like to hear that the Government was alive to this growing grievance, which prevailed not only in the north of Ireland but in the south and west, and that something would be done to restore confidence in the Act. It had been developing peacefully and quickly—["No"];—it was a fact that it was effecting a great revolution in Ireland, in spite of the cold water thrown upon it by hon. Gentlemen below the gangway. Let him warn the Government that if they diverted from the purpose of the Act a sum amounting to £2,000,000 at least, which should have been employed to settle on estates sold years ago, they would incur serious responsibility, and pile up against themselves the charge which must sooner or later be made against them, that they were not openly but secretly doing their best to prevent the tenant farmers from peacefully getting possession of their land and becoming absolute owners of it rapidly and for all time. Those on his side of the House believed this Bill to be pernicious, and that it was intended to benefit people who had no right to look for further British help. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman that when the Bill was in Committee they would feel it their duty on behalf of those who paid their way to see to it that such a measure did not result in further delay under the Act of 1903. He seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day three months.'"—(*Mr. Moore.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL said that before he dealt with the case for the Bill he would like to glance at one or two of the objections advanced by the hon. and learned Member for North Armagh. Much of his speech would have been as relevant to the Bill of 1903 as it was to the present Bill. Let them take the general question of the estimates of the number of these evicted tenants. The hon. and learned Gentleman had expressed his surprise at the growth of the number that would have to be dealt with. The late Chief Secretary for Ireland, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover, on this point said—

> "This Bill dealt with all persons who had lost or surrendered their holdings during the last twenty-five years, and it would be invidious if the Government were to endeavour to select from amongst those who had lost their holdings, for reasons good, bad, or indifferent, during that period a limited number. His offer had been to draw no distinction; to let bygones be bygones, and to give the same facilities to those who had lost their holdings as were given to other persons in Ireland who had farms not adequate to the support of their existence."

He submitted that if they were in favour of limitation, no such limitation was to be found in the speeches of the right hon. Member for Dover.

MR. MOORE said that what he stated was that they should only allow *bona fide* claims and not bogus ones, and what the hon. Member had just quoted did not apply to bogus claims.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL said that what the right hon. Member for Dover stated was that he would reinstate them from whatever cause, but in this Bill the Government did not even go that length. They had asked the Estates Commissioners to go into all these cases, and it was upon the report of their inspectors who had made individual inquiries that the estimate embodied in the Bill had been arrived at. In regard to the question of the acreage of the proposed farms, the Commissioners gave an estimate of what they considered to be an economic holding, but the Government were not bound by that estimate. It was quite true that many farmers in Ulster managed to live on 15 acres of land. What had now been decided to be an economic holding, and what was being proposed for the congested districts, was a farm varying from 30 to 40 acres. That was a recommendation made by the Estates Commissioners to which the Government were in no way bound. The hon. and learned Member for North Armagh had said that the Land Act of 1903 contemplated the purchase of tenanted land. He did not gather that he stated that the object of the Land Act was confined to that, because he must know that that Act provided for the purchase of untenanted land for the express purpose of restoring these evicted tenants and for enlarging economic holdings. There were other larger matters which he would deal with immediately. What was the case for this Bill? He did not plead for it as an ordinary Bill, because it was nothing of the kind. It was a Bill arising out of great calamities, and he thought he was entitled to say that so far as the Government were concerned they were merely giving effect to the Land Act of 1903. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh, oh!"] During what was practically a civil war in Ireland which raged for many years thousands of men and women lost their homes, and were evicted from their holdings for non-payment of rent. He was ready to admit that many of them were evicted because they were soldiers in a fierce fight, and it was to that phase of the question he desired first of all to call attention. His own position in the matter had been referred to, and he wished to make that quite clear. He went through the whole of the crisis from beginning to end. He believed the land system at the time both in law and as it was being worked to be intolerable. He never did and never could support the methods followed to fight the system at that time, and he did not dare to advise people to set themselves against the law. He did, however, his best to alter and amend that law, and to bring succour to those who had suffered under it. The Bill as he understood it professed to eliminate that dangerous issue from the public life of Ireland and to close this struggle for all time. It could be demonstrated that all Parties in that House had declared themselves in favour of the restoration of the evicted tenants, and he did not understand that even the hon. and learned Member for North Armagh opposed that principle. When the Land Purchase Bill of 1891 was being passed he moved a temporary clause, which was now Clause 13 of the Act, and he did that with the entire approval and the full concurrence of the Leader of the Opposition. Under that section the evicted tenants on the Ponsonby and other estates were restored to their holdings, and he was happy to say that he had official knowledge of the fact that many men in those districts who had purchased their holdings were now living under happier influences, and were now engaged not in fighting the law but in growing early potatoes for the Scottish market at £40 an acre. As a member of the Land Conference he ventured to say that the report of that conference never would have seen the light if it had not provided for the restoration of the evicted tenants. The Land Bill of 1903 provided for it, and the late Colonel Saunderson had expressed his desire that this unfortunate chapter in Irish history should be closed. Two such staunch champions of the Irish landlords in that House as Sir John Colomb and Mr. Herbert Robertson used language which was paraphrased by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover in these terms—

> "We admit your difficulties, and so far as we are concerned we do not wish to stand in the way of a full settlement."

What had stood in the way? The truth was that while all the Parties concerned agreed as to the principle of restoration some of them differed as to the method of carrying it out. The Land Bill of 1903 was admittedly founded upon the principle of voluntary sale. Some of them there were in favour of compulsion. They relinquished their view because the right hon. Member for Dover affirmed in the House and in Ireland that he knew compulsion would not be required, and that the problem could be settled without it. They therefore stood aside for the moment so far as compulsion was concerned. They were resolved that the right hon. Gentleman should try his hand and have every fair play. The truth they had now to face was that in the case of the evicted tenants and in the case, generally speaking, of the whole western area, where the poor were mainly concentrated, voluntary sale had failed, and if these festering wounds were ever to be healed the application of compulsion in several cases—probably not in many—was demonstrated to be a necessity. He asked hon. Gentlemen opposite—who agreed that a settlement of the problem was desirable, if it was not essential, as the Government contended, to the peace of Ireland, but who differed from them as to the methods to be employed—was it not proved that the problem was insoluble by means of voluntary sales? [OPPOSITION cries of "No."] Why, he asked, should this or any Government insert compulsory powers in a Bill if it were possible to do without them? Surely, everybody must know that compulsion was only to be arrived at as a last resort, and he would like to ask the House how without this weapon it would be possible to deal with such typical estates as those of the Marquess of Clanricarde and Mr. Lewis in the county of Galway.

MR. MOORE, interrupting, stated that the Lewis estate was offered to the Commissioners for sale, and it appeared afterwards in their Report—and this was a practical instance of the manner in which the Estates Commissioners conducted their administration—that they took on themselves to find that there were no tenancies upon it, and proposed to offer prices for it as being untenanted land. They could have had the whole estate at the ordinary price if they had treated with the occupying tenants.

A NATIONALIST MEMBER: Who were the occupying tenants?

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL said the facts were that Lord Clanricarde would not sell on any terms, and that, as the hon. and learned Member said, terms were submitted to the Lewis's, but it was found to be impossible to bring about a sale. It should be remembered that when they were buying these lands they were bought to be re-sold. Lord Clanricarde would not listen to anything, and that involved 150 tenants, and in the case of the Lewis estate terms could not be arranged, and therefore the tenants could not be re-instated. These were two cases for which he submitted there was no remedy short of compulsion. But they did not stand alone. A few months ago he took part in an adjourned meeting of the Land Conference to consider this very question. According to his recollection there were then some hundreds of evicted farms in the hands of individual landlords. Some were derelict and some were being cultivated by the landlords. Others were in grass, In scores of cases leave for the Estates Commissioners to inspect the land was refused. He was not arguing that the landlords had not a perfect right to refuse leave. His point was how could a settlement of the problem be reached in the presence of such a spirit? It was a question that concerned farms all over the country. In face of facts like these it was impossible to contend that voluntary sale would meet the case. Compulsion was absolutely necessary, although he believed that when that was secured its exercise would be on a very limited scale indeed. He now came to a matter of very great importance to which the hon. and learned Member had referred, and about which there had always been a good deal of feeling. He meant the case of the planters—the men who took the evicted farms. It was proposed in the Bill to give powers to the Estates Commissioners, where they thought fit, to acquire compulsorily these holdings after paying compensation either by way of new holdings or by way of money. It was said that this was right in the teeth of the declaration made by the Irish Leader and by everybody else in 1903. He agreed. It was no part of his case that these declarations were not made. The understanding arrived at in 1903 was that persuasion and inducement might be applied to those men, but not coercion. It was asked: "Why do you turn round now and break your pledges to those men." His answer was that the whole Bill of 1903 was founded upon the principle of voluntaryism. Compulsion was ruled out all along the line. The principle of voluntaryism as regarded the evicted tenants and as regarded the western estates had broken down, and applying this new principle of compulsion from necessity and not from choice to the landlords, how could the Government refrain from applying it to the planters as well? They were soldiers of fortune—he knew a good deal about them—who went into the fight mainly for what could be got out of it. He failed to see where and at whom the line could be drawn. The Government, believing compulsion to be necessary in certain cases, had applied it alike to landlord and tenant, but as would be seen by the Bill, it would only be applied when inducement failed. Knowing more about the planter race than any man in the House of Commons and more than many men outside it, although he was not a prophet nor the son of a prophet, he ventured to think there would be very little difficulty when inducement in the shape of solid cash came in contact with them. As to the case of the planters, he would refer the House to what took place on the Masserene estate the other day. That was the last estate settled of the Plan of Campaign estates. Those of them who were in the old Parliament would remember the fierce conflicts which took place in regard to that estate. Men were evicted and planters were brought from different parts of Ireland and placed on the holdings. They remained there and they had never had one happy or comfortable day since. They had been there in spite of the public opinion of the neighbourhood. No violence had been resorted to, but they had never had one happy or comfortable day because they had never had the esteem of their neighbours, and the esteem of one's neighbours counted for something. If they wanted to borrow a horse or a plough they would find if they were well thought of in the neighbourhood how easy it was to do it; but if they were not well thought of they would quickly discover how difficult it was to obtain the loan of such things. These planters were there for twelve or fifteen years. What had happened? Lord Masserene died recently, and he was succeeded by his son. Efforts were made at once for the reinstatement of those men, and they succeeded. The planters were compensated and they had gone. The old tenants were back and peace had been restored to the neighbourhood. It was merely a question of terms and nothing else. The planting of these men, let the House remember, was not a case of the planting of ordinary farmers. In many cases these men were not farmers at all, and the planting of them was an act of war. The war was now over, and he submitted that although the cases of these planters might strike one as being hard they would go willingly when an adequate inducement was offered to them. He came now to the next and what the hon. and learned Member made his principal attack on the Bill. He meant the tribunal which was to fix the price of the land acquired. He had been in the House of Commons twenty-one years, and he had heard furious attacks made upon public servants. They were always repudiated by the Gentlemen who now sat on the Front Opposition Bench and by the Conservative Party generally. He had never, however, heard a worse attack made upon a public servant than had been made on his friend Mr. Bailey, one of the Estates Commissioners, that night. Mr. Bailey was charged with taking his instructions from the *Freeman's Journal*, and the late Solicitor-General for Ireland said "Hear hear" to that. What was the Conservative Party coming to? How often had the decisions of the Estates Commissioners been taken to a higher tribunal? Cases had gone to the superior Courts from these gentlemen over and over again. What had happened? The judgments had almost always been in favour of the two Commissioners and against the one. The tribunal to fix the price of the land under the Bill was the Estates Commission, and that was strongly objected to. Let them consider what was the state of matters in Ireland in regard to fixing the price of land. A tenant under the Act of 1881 went into a fair rent Court to get his rent fixed. In the process the landlord stepped in and called upon the Land Commission to fix what was called in the Act the true value of the holding—that was the true value of the tenant's interest in the holding. There was one lawyer and one farmer to decide that.

AN HON. MEMBER: Not always a farmer.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL said he was taking things at their best. After the declaration had been made by the Court and placed upon the record, if the tenant desired to sell his interest in the farm on the open market what happened was this: he was offered £1,000 for his interest. The true valuehad been put at £700. The landlord came in and exercised his right of pre-emption and the tenant'sproperty went at £700 instead of at £1,000. That was one way of deciding the price of land in Ireland. Then there was Judge Ross's Court where land was sold every day by auction. But Judge Ross had the power of fixing the price of land. He had nothing to say against Judge Ross. He was an old colleague of theirs in the House. He was an old friend of his own long before either of them thought of Parliament. But Judge Ross was not an expert on land and he had little or no expert assistance in his Court. Yet to him and to him alone was confided the duty of fixing the price of the land which he sold. What were the Estates Commissioners doing every day under the Act of 1903? These men were appointed by the late Government. What were the powers conferred on them? He left out the zones. Their powers in that respect were certainly limited; some hon. Members wished they were not. But for all sales outside the zones nobody would deny that they were really the arbiters of the price the landlord was to get. They were buying untenanted land every day under the Act. These men were challenged that night, but why were they not challenged in 1903? Why was not Mr. Bailey challenged then? He had been thirteen years in the service of the Land Commission and not a word had been breathed against him. It was impossible to shut out from their consideration that attacks were being made on Mr. Bailey and Mr

Finucane which were grossly unfair. They were public servants who could not defend themselves. It was said they were prejudiced against landlords. The real truth was that up to the present day the Irish landlords had done uncommonly well and they knew it. Taking the last Report of the Estates Commissioners the facts were that under the decisions of these Commissioners the Irish landlord was securing for his land twenty-five years purchase, with a bonus of 12 per cent. equal to three more years purchase. The Estates Commissioners fixed the price and the result of their action was that the landlords were receiving twenty-eight years purchase for their land including the bonus. Would not any landlord in England like to get twenty-eight years purchase for his land? It was an outrageous thing to attack the Commissioners on the ground that they were prejudiced against the landlords. They had been called upon to perform most difficult duties, and had been left by the Act itself the largest possible discretion. They were appointed by a Tory and not by a Liberal Government, and believing that they had the experience, the sense of fair play, and the courage to do what was right the Government had placed them in the Bill as the tribunal. They were not purchasers in the ordinary sense of the term. They were purchasers for the State, and as the land must be resold it was evident it must be purchased at a price it could be sold at, or the State must bear the loss. The Commissioners had a sense of fair play. There was not the feeling against them which the hon. and learned Member asserted, and it was absolutely essential they should have something to say as to the price which was to be paid. Another objection to the Bill, urged with considerable force by the hon. and learned Member, was that it would involve a large expenditure of money; though the hon. and learned Member was wrong—not of course intentionally—in suggesting that the improvement expenses would come out of the money for land purchase. The hon. and learned Member thought the money should be spent not upon evicted tenants, but upon respectable men who had paid their way. That language carried a far-off echo. He had heard that argument before. In dark and evil days, more terrible than these, he was himself wont to make great play with it. However, when he used it there was a good deal to be said for it. It was one thing to plead that the money should be husbanded for tenants who had not violated the law when the money for land purchase was limited to a certain amount. When the Ashbourne Acts placed £10,000,000 at the disposal of the farmer it was not out of place to argue that the man who had kept the law should have a prior chance. Even when the £33,000,000 in the Act of 1901 were given the argument might be applied. Now when it was admitted that land purchase must be seen through to the end, and when there was no limit to the money—ther really was no limit either in the Act or in any other way—when there was practically no limit to the money, and when both Parties in the State were bound to see the question through to the end, what was there to be said for the plea that certain men should be selected out of the population of Ireland for this favour? If there was anything in it had not the respectable farmer had a pretty good time of it? £23,000,000 under the old purchase Acts, £53,000,000 applied for under the present Act—was it not time when something might be done for those men who fought when other people did not? Every man on a farm in Ireland believed that the charters he had at his back would never have been won but for the fight they made—he spoke for farmers of the North who believed that as profoundly as he did—and he thought it not unreasonable that the cases of these men should now be frankly and fairly considered. The Bill took money from nobody. These lands would have to be purchased and would have to be sold. The case for the Government was that they proposed to do it now under this Bill. There was another objection that had been stated in Ireland. It had not been mentioned in that debate, but it deserved serious consideration. Three or four years ago when this matter was before the House it was unquestioned that most of those who were concerned in the debate thought the number would be extremely small. He himself thought at the time that it would be practically confined to the Plan of Campaign and similar estates. These estates, with two exceptions, had now been settled and still something like 2,000 cases remained to be dealt with. The problem, therefore, was somewhat larger than many of them anticipated in 1903. He would point out that the right hon. Member for Dover certainly imposed no limitation. He wanted to take all the evicted tenants who were affected from whatever cause. That was more than the Bill did. He would point out that all had been guesswork up to now. The Government had, however, now found out the exact number. The land war was not confined to the Campaign estates. There were what were called beleaguered outposts all over the country where the fighting for what was believed to be hearth and homestead was maintained. If this question was to be settled at all the only thing to do was to find out who had suffered. The Government claimed to have done that. The hon. and learned Member for North Armagh wanted the names published. He thought the hon. Member knew that there would be a great commotion in Ireland between the five or six thousand who were rejected and the two thousand who were accepted. That would entirely meet the object of the hon. and learned Member. Nobody ever dreamed of restoring men who had lost their farms from inability to conduct their business, from want of thrift, from drunken habits, or from anything of that kind. These men had been remorselessly ruled out of the selected cases, each one of which had been inquired into by the Commissioners.

Sir E. CARSON (Dublin University): Has there been any hearing in these cases?

*Mr. T. W. RUSSELL said that what had taken place was this: An inspector had been appointed for a certain district; he had gone over his district; he had discovered those who were evicted; and he had investigated each claim by itself on the spot. There had been no judicial hearing. The Government of the day never proposed to have a judicial hearing in the cases in 1903. The Commissioners had reported on each case separately. In the opinion of the Estates Commissioners, who had not been very reckless, because they had selected only 2,000 out of 9,000 or 10,000, these men had just claims to reinstatement. They believed the men had these just claims after reading the report on each individual case. What was more, the Estates Commissioners believed that with assistance under the Act of 1903, to which they were entitled, they had a fair chance of redeeming the past, and doing well. It had been said in Ireland, if not in the House of Commons, that some of the tenants who had been evicted and put back on the land, had sold their holdings, and gone to America. It might be so in a few instances. What then? The Estates Commissioners had a solvent purchaser at all events. He would like, before he sat down, having dealt with the main objections to the Bill, to make an appeal to the House, an appeal, not only on the merits of the Bill itself, but of a somewhat different character. The main object of the Act of 1903 was to set up a system of occupying ownership of the land. The very success of the Act brought with it its own embarrassments, as was illustrated last Friday. £51,000,000 had been applied for in the last four years, and one who, like himself, was an enthusiast for land purchase in 1903, must think the result surprising. The right hon. Member for Dover, speaking in that House in 1903, did not guarantee that the progress for the three years would exceed £5,000,000 a year. It had gone far beyond that. No one could deny that the vendors of this land had been treated generously, but there was one fact deplorable in itself, and productive of the greatest friction and trouble. What he called the ameliorative side of the Act, namely, the enlargement of economic holdings, and the restoration of evicted tenants, and all kinds of ameliorative work contemplated by the Act, had almost entirely failed. The enlargement and improvement of uneconomic holdings had not made anything like adequate progress. It had been barred at every step, and the restoration of evicted tenants had not made progress. Yet these two things were aimed at by the Bill of 1903 itself. He believed that the right hon. Member for Dover never contemplated that these people, wearing out their lives on miserable patches of land on the roadside, should be left in misery, while wealthy landowners and well-to-do tenants marched off with the whole of the land-purchase money. In by-gone days they heard a great deal about the state of Ireland. They had not heard so much in recent years, but they must not forget that these two things vital to the peace and comfort of the people had been left practically untouched by that great measure, and they could not shut their eyes to the fact that agrarianism was once more raising its head in Ireland. He had recently visited the West of Ireland, and found the people whom he had met long ago sullen and dejected, now cheerful, and many of them content. He saw men transferred from five acres of bog to thirty acres of good land, happy and doing well. He saw an improvement going on in the breeding of horses, cattle, and poultry, and he visited convents and saw the nuns teaching the theory of domestic economy. He came away profoundly thankful for what Parliament had been able to do. Lawlessness was confined to a very limited area of the country he visited, and of course the law must be upheld. But the people were dissatisfied with the administration of the Act, and were waiting for the Government to remedy its defects. On his return, when he was asked about the alleged lawlessness, he simply told his friends to keep their heads. He should be astonished if it extended and he was glad to say not a man or beast had been injured. They had by their legislation acquired land and made numbers of people relatively comfortable. But the work had come to a stand, and the people who saw their neighbours in possession of benefits which they could not get were naturally impatient. These intimations to the Government, however, were not necessary; the Government were aware of the problem, and had promised to deal with it. Let the House now pass this measure with its blessed oblivion of the past and its message of hope for the future. When Parliament had done by legislation all it could do, there would still be left enough for the Irish people to do to build up the walls that had been thrown down. The Irish peasants were not naturally lawless, but were the most God-fearing, purest-minded peasantry on the face of the earth.

MR. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.) thought that anybody who had listened to the concluding part of the hon. Gentleman's speech must have been astounded how little, even in apparently his own mind, he was able to justify his remarks in support of the Bill they were now considering. The hon. Gentleman had tried to do a little too much. He had sought to justify the Bill which was now before the House, but throughout the whole of his speech from beginning to end he had shown, with one or two exceptions, how the very objects which the Government had in view had been achieved or could be achieved under the law as it stood. The hon. Gentleman did not go on to show the grounds upon which this most remarkable Bill was founded. In his peroration he appealed to the House, in terms with which they were now very familiar, to pass this Bill in order to remove the causes of discontent, and he referred incidentally to that which was after all the most important part of this agrarian question, viz., the making of uneconomic holdings into economic holdings. The greater part of his speech dealt with that question, but the Bill would have no effect in regard to it, but left by far the greater part of it untouched. If the speech were to be taken as justifying this legislation it showed that the Government were lacking in that quality which they were supposed greatly to possess, courage, and that they had not the courage of their convictions. If they had they would cover the whole ground. The hon. Gentleman was very severe on the hon. Member for North Armagh for what he said about the Estates Commissioners. The hon. Member seemed to have forgotten that by the Act of 1903 the Estates Commissioners were deliberately put into a position that would leave them open to the criticism of Parliament during the whole of their administration. He presumed the hon. Gentleman meant that although that power of criticism was put in it was not done with the object of Parliament giving effect to it.

*Mr. T. W. RUSSELL said that of course he was aware that the Estates Commissioners were subject to Parliamentary criticism, but it was the criticism of the case made against them which was simply abuse.

Mr. WALTER LONG said that the hon. Member, who had had an enormous experience of the House of Commons, might have found something stronger in the shape of a reply to the hon. and learned Member for North Armagh than to call it abuse; but the hon. and learned Member spoke for a class who felt rightly or wrongly there was a prejudice on one side on the part of those who had to administer the Act. He was bound to say that when he heard the hon. Gentleman find fault with that, and recalled the part the hon. Member had taken in the debates of that House, he felt that one ought not to be too severe upon him in the matter. The hon. Gentleman's real task was not to justify that Bill so much as to justify his own position in assuming an attitude to-day so different from that assumed in days gone by. The hon. Gentleman dealt with the arguments of the hon. Member for North Armagh and poured contempt on his interpretation of the powers of that Bill. The hon. and learned Member had complained that there were still left and must be still left in Ireland a vast number of uneconomic holdings, which if the agrarian question was to be satisfactorily solved ought to be dealt with before they attempted to deal in a different way with the evicted tenants' question. His hon. friend had pointed out that in this Bill they were going to give plots of 40 acres of land to these evicted tenants. How did they justify that when they left untouched other uneconomic holdings all over Ireland? The Vice-President of the Board of Agriculture said the Government was not bound by these 40 acres, that this was an open question, a question for settlement. But he did not find in the Bill anything about Government administration. That administration passed into the hands of the Commissioners, and what the hon. and learned Member for North Armagh criticised was the power given to the Commissioners to grant these portions of land to these people. However hard their circumstances and condition might be, they were no harder and no worse than those of men who occupied uneconomic holdings in which they could not by any possibility make a living. His hon. friend was absolutely sound on his criticisms on that part of the Bill, and the Minister's argument in reply fell far short of the mark. The hon. Gentleman described the Bill as, "Not an ordinary Bill, but one to deal with a great calamity and to give effect to the Act of 1893 to restore the wounded soldiers."

*Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: I never used the phrase.

Mr. WALTER LONG: I took it down at the time.

*Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: In a different part of the speech I used the phrase "soldiers in a great fight."

Mr. WALTER LONG said he took the words down at the time, but if the hon. Member withdrew them he would not press it further. He quite accepted the hon. Member's statement, and must have misapprehended him. But they could not justify a Bill of that character solely on the ground that they were going to restore those who had lost their holdings through some action of their own—either through a desire to fight their own cause, or through following bad advice. Yet what did the hon. Gentleman say? What did the whole of the speech point to? It pointed to the fact that marvellous results had followed land legislation, that a great transference of land from the landowner to the occupier had taken place. He had listened with amazement to the hon. Gentleman's condemnation of the sales that had taken place on the property of the Duke of Leinster. It was perfectly true that the Act of 1903 was passed to secure the transfer of land from owner to occupier, and to make the occupier the resident owner of the land. It was quite true that the improvement of the uneconomic holdings and the restoration of the evicted tenants were also objects in view; but the hon. Gentleman criticised that Act of Parliament, and said that, whereas they had men suffering in the West whose condition was not and would not be improved by the Act, in the meantime these great estates would be settled, and he asked was that the intention of the Act? It certainly was. Was it to be a criticism against that Act that the farmers who had become owners of their holdings on those estates were prosperous and had made a good living for themselves, and that the evicted tenants' question had not arisen on these estates? If it was not, why did the hon. Gentleman raise that as a criticism of the Act of 1903? From the beginning to the end of his speech the hon. Gentleman had not attempted to prove that circumstances existed which would alone justify the passing of such a Bill as they were then considering. When they looked forward to the introduction of that Bill by the Chief Secretary they thought he would be able to show the breakdown of the Act of 1903 in respect of the evicted tenants. The speech of the Vice-President of the Board of Agriculture amounted to this, that because when he was in Ireland last time he found fifteen of the seventeen estates had been dealt with, they were now to pass this Bill to deal with the Clanricarde and Lewis estates. The Bill could only be justified by establishing the fact that the opposition of the landlords was so strong that the tenants could not get their land without compulsion. His hon. friend had said that there were some holdings to which tenants had been restored which had been sold by their owners. What was the hon. Gentleman's reply? He said: What did that matter; they had solvent tenants. What an argument to advance to Parliament for a Bill of that sort, which was not to get solvent tenants but to restore evicted tenants! Everyone knew that probably the greatest difficulty in this matter was, not to get solvent tenants, but to get sufficient land for those who now occupied uneconomic holdings. That was and ought to be the first consideration, and not to restore evicted tenants, however hard and painful their case might be. In restoring these evicted tenants also, they should create the smallest possible disturbance to evicted tenants. Was that the policy of that Bill? Proceeding as it did to take the land from tenants, who would take the existing farms? The hon. Gentleman dealt rather contemptuously with the new tenants and spoke of them as if they were not entitled to consideration. This was not the first time that the question of evicting the new tenants, "planters," as they had been called, had been raised. It was raised when the Secretary for India was Chief Secretary, and the right hon. Gentleman had said he would never be a party to an Act that was to turn out those men who had come in under the protection of the law and done their best to make their farms a success. Did that plan involve, as it ought to involve, the minimum of disturbance? He thought the condition the hon. Gentleman should establish was that in the work that the Bill was going to do the fullest possible justice would be done to the people whose property he was going to take away. If it was to be done in the interests of the general community, the Government should be able to show that they were going to do the fullest possible justice—something more than justice—to those whose property they were going to take, not for any fault of their own, not because they had evicted their tenants, or had ever been guilty of wrong-doing in regard to their estates, but because it was necessary to provide holdings for men who had done nothing for the property they were to get. Surely the House should have heard something from the Government in justification for the introduction of compulsion. The hon. Member for South Tyrone had told them that compulsion was absolutely necessary because voluntary sale had failed, but at the end of his speech he had admitted that over £50,000,000 worth of land had been bought under the Land Act. He had also given them a picture of what he had seen in his county in Ireland; how that men, contented and prosperous, were now growing potatoes and making a good profit out of them. That result was admitted, not by those who were responsible for the Act of 1903, but by those who now criticised that Act in order to found a case for saying that voluntary purchase had broken down, and that therefore compulsion must be introduced. Even supposing that compulsion must be introduced, they should have heard something more from the hon. Gentleman in justification of the particular form of compulsion proposed.

So far as he knew, there was no precedent to be found for the particular form of compulsion proposed in this Bill. Surely the Minister speaking for the Government should have not only said that compulsion was necessary and that the Act had broken down, but that compulsion was necessary because of the individual action of those who resisted the reinstatement of evicted tenants. The Estates Commissioners were now purchasing under the Act of 1903. At present it rested with the owner of property to accept or refuse the offer of purchase. But under this Bill there was no such power on the part of the owner; he would be compelled to give up his land because the Estates Commissioners said that that particular piece of land was the piece they wanted. Was it not absurd to ask them to accept the powers under the Act of 1903 which the Commissioners now possessed, as a justification for the extraordinary powers which the Government were seeking to place in their hands? And how much more ridiculous it was to quote Mr. Justice Ross. What Mr. Justice Ross did was to fix the minimum price. That was a totally different thing from selecting a particular piece of land from an estate; and the hon. Gentleman himself had said that, in arriving at the price, the Commissioners had to bear in mind that they had to buy at a price which would enable them to sell upon proper terms. Surely that was responsibility enough for a body to be charged with in the administration of this Bill. Surely it would have been better to have found some system of compulsion by which they would have one body to name the price and purchase and another to sanction the compulsory powers and decide whether the price was fair to the seller or not. The hon. Gentleman had talked about evicted tenants and the view taken by Unionists with regard to them. So far as he had been able to ascertain from the earliest debates which had taken place on this subject, there had always been a frank admission by all parties concerned that it was desirable to put these men back. Nobody denied that the existence on the land of men who had suffered as they believed unjustly, must be a danger to the peace, and a serious drawback to the prosperity of the locality. The hon. Gentleman had said himself that the existence of these men might lead to the recrudescence of serious agrarian trouble. He hoped that might not be; but he hoped also that the hon. Gentleman's words about the duty of the Government to put down this kind of thing would not end in the phrases the House had heard from him and his colleagues, but that they would be given effect to in their administration. They could, if they would, somewhat alter the form in which they put the case, and say that it was the bounden duty of the Government of the day to put down that sort of thing before proposing legislation which, if it was not successful, would add to instead of lessen existing difficulties. The Government did not realise, he thought, that in dealing with the evicted tenants, it was not merely difficulties connected with the quantity or quality of the land; there was another cause which had been ignored and would be found to be a very serious obstacle in the way of the administration of this Bill if it passed into law, and that difficulty was the keeping of the number of selected tenants down to 2,000. They knew perfectly well that that was not what was meant in Ireland. The demand in Ireland was not for a selected 2,000, or that the number should be rigorously cut down; and it was not that there should be this rigorous investigation by the Estates Commissioners. The demand in Ireland was that all the evicted tenants should be restored before the sales took place; and the hon. Gentleman knew perfectly well, as did all those who had followed this part of the agrarian movement in Ireland, that on many occasions the advice was given that the sales should not take place unless they included the restoration of the evicted tenants. The hon. Gentleman would remember perfectly well that originally the question of the evicted tenants was supposed to be limited to those who had been connected with the Plan of Campaign, or whose eviction had been brought about by some analogous circumstances; but the hon. Gentleman also knew that they had got beyond that limitation altogether, and that the present number which the

Government proposed to take would upset the line of demarcation which had enabled that stand to be taken. The hon. Gentleman had been somewhat indignant, and rather unworthily indignant, with his hon. and learned friend for demanding the names of the men, saying that he had pressed for those names because it served his purpose; but if this Bill passed the Government would find out before very long that, although they declined to give the names now, they would have to be disclosed when the Act was in operation; they might postpone the evil day by declining to give information as to how the 2,000 names had been arrived at, but when the Bill was passed, and put in operation, they would then find out how unstable were the grounds on which the Government rested their contention that they would be able to limit the number to 2,000. Really, when they passed away from the particular form of compulsion, the whole thing turned very largely on this question of the number. The hon. Gentleman believed that his hon. and learned friend was exaggerating when he referred to the probable cost of the Bill. It was a remarkable point to remember that on the previous Friday they were engaged in discussing the finance of the Irish Land Bill, and yet at the very time they knew that there was £30,000,000 worth more property to be sold than there was money or machinery to deal with it. The Government made the present extraordinary proposal which they sought to justify on the ground that the case was pressing and the number limited. He did not believe that the Government would be able to limit the numbers. He very much doubted whether the tenants themselves, or those who had been evicted, would accept the kind of elimination process which the Government had adopted. The hon. Member for South Tyrone had never dealt with that part of his hon. and learned friend's closely and powerfully argued speech, in which he showed that there had been more rapid progress made already in regard to the restoration of evicted tenants than there had been with regard to the transfer of land from owner to occupier; that had been going steadily on, and a number of cases had already been satisfactorily dealt with. The hon. Gentleman had quoted two cases, the Clanricarde and Lewis estates. In regard to the Lewis estate, he had read the whole of the correspondence that had passed between the Estates Commissioners and the representatives of the estate, and he failed to see that it was a case which justified a Bill of this kind. The Bill proposed to deal with evicted tenants, but what was the main difficulty in the case of the Lewis estate? The owner of the property, a widow, had let a portion of it to two of her sons. They had been in occupation for fifteen years and were content to go on, being able to make a good living for themselves. In the name of fortune why was that estate to be quoted as justifying the introduction of a measure of this kind? Surely what the Government, and what everybody who had studied the agrarian question in Ireland, wanted was that they should have men occupying farms who were able to pay the rent value of them and make a decent living. The only case that remained under the Plan of Campaign was that of the Clanricarde estate. Were they to be told that because the present owner of that estate declined to sell it or to deal further with the evicted tenants, they were justified in taking these special powers? He was told that it would be extremely difficult to deal with the evicted tenants connected with that particular estate by acquiring portions of it. It came to this, that the Government were going to take compulsory powers which could be applied to other estates in order to apply them to this particular property. Could injustice go further? What assurance had they from the Government that those who were going to deal with this matter would seek first of all to get the land they wanted on the estates from which tenants had been evicted? In many cases they could only get it by disturbing the planters, and in other cases they would be unable to get it because suitable land did not exist. It seemed to him extraordinary to try and justify this particular form of compulsion by two cases, one of which did not apply at all, while the other would not be dealt with by the Bill. The question of the number of the evicted tenants presented the greatest difficulty in the matter. He did not believe the Government would be able to keep it at 2,000 or anything like it. The Vice-President and the Chief Secretary based their case on the proposition that this difficulty was to be dealt with by a final scheme; but what proof was there of finality in the scheme before them? The whole speech of the hon. Member for South Tyrone went to show that most of his own hopes had been disappointed by the actual operation of the Act of 1903. If he told them that, how could he expect them to attach importance to an argument today which was based far more upon hope in regard to the future than upon any evidence which he or his Government had given? As he understood it, under this remarkable clause two of the Estates Commissioners were to have full power to go where they would, take what land they liked, and immediately after publication of their notice enter upon the land and do all such things as might be necessary for the purpose of enabling them to determine whether it would be suitable. There was no protection for the unfortunate owner of the estate, who might have had nothing to do with the evicted tenants for whom the land was wanted, and whose only fault might be that he happened to possess land which the Estates Commissioners thought would be desirable. Having gone through these preliminaries, the Commissioners were charged with compulsory powers. The most extraordinary thing of all was Sub-section (7), which dealt with the petition. This was to be presented to the very men who had selected the land and had put the compulsion in order. It was to be heard and determined by the Estates Commissioners, or any two of them, and their decision was to be final. A more extraordinary form of compulsorily taking another man's property he had never heard of. There was no appeal, no opportunity for the owners or sitting tenants to present their case. Whatever might be the necessity for this measure, he could not believe that Parliament would pass these compulsory powers without giving to the people concerned some protection as against the decisions of the Commissioners. He was not making any charge against the Commissioners. He was urging the case on behalf of them. He thought the Government were putting them not only in a very difficult but in a very unfair position by the powers they were imposing on them under this section. There was no protection against their decision, and if they were unfair there was no appeal to any independent body before whom all parties could be heard and whose decision should be final. He could not believe that this House would approve of a policy of that kind. They had been told that the Estates Commissioners fixed the price now; but that was a totally different case, because their offer might be refused. In this case their offer had to be taken by the landlords: they had no power of refusal. Surely there ought to be some other tribunal to whom an appeal could be made before a final decision was arrived at. In carrying out the reinstatement of these tenants the Government apparently realised that the arrangements might involve some loss, and it had been decided that such loss should be paid out of the bonus fund. That seemed to him to be an extraordinary, a most unfair, and a very uncalled-for proposal, and he hoped the House would hear something more about it when the Chief Secretary replied. Upon what grounds was it sought to justify the laying of this extra burden upon the bonus fund? A great deal had been said about the bargain made under the Act of 1903. Nobody would deny that the creation of that bonus was a very important part of that bargain, but surely that ought not to be impinged upon except for some solid reason. So far they had had absolutely no justification for this most remarkable proposal. With regard to the alteration of the tenure of the Estates Commissioners, he had been much puzzled by it, because the Irish Government were quite aware of the controversy which had arisen over Section 23 of the Act, which put some administrative control over the Estates Commissioners and placed it in the hands of the Lord-Lieutenant. What would be the effect upon Clause 23 of this particular change, and what was its object? Was it intended to put the Estates Commissioners in a position in their relations with the Irish Government and with Parliament which they did not occupy now? If that was not the intention, what was the justification for this particular change? This Bill was going to give extremely difficult powers and very responsible duties to the Estates Commissioners, who already had very laborious and heavy duties to discharge. It was now proposed to add considerably to those duties powers of a very delicate and extremely responsible character. Were they going to remove the work of these Commissioners from the criticism of Parliament to which it was generally agreed when the Act of 1903 was passed they ought to be subjected? If that provision was necessary in 1903 it was all the more necessary now when they were proposing to add to the duties of the Commissioners and placing upon their shoulders a task of great magnitude. However well they might perform their duties, and however single-minded they might be in considering this question, he was satisfied that both sides desired that there should be this criticism, and he could not believe that it was seriously intended that the Estates Commissioners should be removed in the smallest degree from that criticism in Parliament to which they ought to be subjected. It was claimed for the Estates Commissioners that they were civil servants who could not defend themselves, and that was perfectly true. There was, however, a great distinction between civil servants and the Estates Commissioners, because in the former case they were subject to the control of the Minister who presided over their Department, but in regard to a large part of their work the Commissioners acted independently. There was nothing in the Bill to show that the Government of the day was going to control them and nothing which gave the Lord-Lieutenant or his advisers any control, although the duties of the Commissioners were being greatly added to. Therefore they were adding to the duties which these men performed independently of Government control, and the reasons for exposing them to the criticism of Parliament in 1903 were greater still at the present time. He would have been glad if the Government had shown that they could not deal with the evicted tenants under the existing law, but they had not been able to prove that. They had not been able to show that there was any obstructive action on the part of landowners which had rendered compulsion necessary. There was nothing of that sort in the Bill. They were asked to support it not upon arguments which went to prove that their contentions were wrong, or that the principle of the Bill was a good one, but on the ground that there were agrarian difficulties in Ireland and that those difficulties might be added to if a Bill of this kind was not passed. He was quite certain that no one who had ever been responsible for the Irish Government would deal lightly with the agrarian question, nor lightly pass by any attempt to lessen the suffering and trouble which arose from agrarian difficulties. If he believed that this Bill would settle those difficulties, heal this sore, and produce the result they all so heartily desired, he would be willing to strain his conscience to the utmost in accepting proposals which he believed to be based on injustice and wrong. But there was no such conviction pressed on his mind, either by a study of the Bill, or by a study of past history and of the present agrarian difficulty in Ireland. He believed they were more likely by the Bill to add to their agrarian difficulties, and create new ones. The Government were resting themselves on the fact that they could limit these evicted tenants within the prescribed number, and comforting themselves with the conviction that that would be accepted as a solution of the difficulty. He believed they would awaken to find that they were not justified in the view they held, but that they were more likely to create among those who were not in the 2,000 a feeling of bitter disappointment and dissatisfaction, which would outweigh anything they might do for the 2,000. For these reasons he should certainly support the Amendment of his hon. friend.

*SIR W. NUGENT (Westmeath, S.) said he thought when the right hon. Gentleman introduced this Bill that at least it was an Irish Bill on which Members in every part of the House would agree, and least of all did he think that the opposition would spring from that part of the House from which it had come. Day after day during the time he had been a Member of the House, he had heard hon. Members ask the Chief Secretary if he was aware of the blood-curdling outrages which had occurred in certain parts of Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman was not aware of them. If those hon. Gentlemen who asked Questions knew that those outrages were occurring, and if they were really desirous of peace in Ireland, why did they not support this measure, the primary object of which was to make those outrages impossible? The majority of these who had spoken on the question had practically all admitted that the evicted tenants should be reinstated, but the objection made to the Bill to-day was in regard to the compulsion clause. That was a very natural objection on their part, and he must say that under ordinary circumstances they would all share that objection; but they had not to deal with ordinary circumstances. The condition of Ireland was certainly extraordinary. He did not wish to refer to the past, but there was not a single Member of the House who did not know that the position of affairs in Ireland was due to the action of this country in the past. He did not think that anybody would deny that if England had adopted the same policy in other portions of the globe there would not now be any Colonies, and there never would have been a British Empire. If this compulsory clause was omitted from the Bill the result would be that here and there in some portions of Ireland some rich men, with large properties perhaps—he thought the cases would be few—would refuse absolutely to consider this question of reinstatement. But he did not think compulsion would have to be applied in many cases, and where it was necessary nothing else would be of any avail. Those men of great wealth would perhaps try to pursue what the hon. Member for East Mayo described as a campaign of vengeance. Would the majority of this House support them in such a scheme? For his own part he did not think they would. From what they had heard from hon. Members above the gangway that day they might take it that no Act would ever please them, as no Chief Secretary had ever been able to please them. The present Leader of the Opposition it might have been supposed would please them when he was Chief Secretary, but not a bit of it. They said that he did more harm than any Chief Secretary that ever came to Ireland. The right hon. Member for Dover was credited by the Nationalists with the best intentions, but Unionist Members from Ireland shuddered at the mention of his name. What their opinion was of the present Chief Secretary he would be afraid to suggest to the House, but he thought it was probable that they would not regret if his bones were added to the "dried bones of belated bigotry" which he had advised them not to trouble. It was admitted by the Chief Secretary that crime in the ordinary sense did not exist in Ireland. The misfortune was that the Irish people were not understood by the people of England. Their views of the Irish people were often taken from highly-coloured pictures drawn by men who never missed an opportunity of vilifying their fellow-countrymen. The tenants whom it was proposed to reinstate were men who were evicted at a time when they thought they were carrying on a great agrarian campaign. The right hon. Member for South Dublin, speaking in the House on the 14th February last, said:

> "There could be no doubt whatever that in the interest, not merely of those unfortunate people themselves, whatever their past history might have been, but in the interest of the successful working of the great Purchase Act, their reinstatement was looked upon as an essential element, and as a thing that had been promised by Parliament."

The right hon. Gentleman further said:

> "He could not agree to compulsion because in certain cases there had been unwillingness on the part of the landlords to come under the operation of the Purchase Act. But if the Government were in a position to say that the Act could not operate, that there were difficulties in its way even where fair and reasonable terms had been offered, it was a question that would require grave consideration on the part of everyone who was desirous to see the Act operating and restoring peace and order to a country which had been too long distracted by troubles of all sorts."

He and his friends maintained that those circumstances did now exist, and that there was no solution except that proposed in the present Bill. He appreciated the spirit in which it was introduced, and he sincerely hoped that in its simplicity and thoroughness it might serve as a model for another Bill, which would end once and for all all points of dispute between the two countries, by giving to Ireland that place which was hers by rights, among the self-governing Colonies, and by giving the Irish people a chance of being, what he believed they would all then be, the staunchest supporters and most loyal friends of this country.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.) congratulated the hon. Baronet the Member for South Westmeath on his excellent and spirited speech. Before proceeding to criticise the provisions of the Bill, he would like to refer to a few of the statements made by the Vice-President of the Board of Agriculture in Ireland. They all knew that the hon. Member had been from time immemorial a sworn ally of the tenant farmer in Ireland. The landlord had always been to him a person deserving of no consideration. It was true that by some means or other, of which he himself had never been able to get at the bottom, the hon. Member was persuaded to attend the famous Land Conference, which resulted in the Act of 1903, but the House would have observed that every time the hon. Member made reference to that Conference and to that Act he said he regretted every day of his life that the Conference took place or that the Bill ever became law. The hon. Member, speaking of the results of the Land Conference to his friends below the gangway, said they would understand that it went to his heart to see the prices which were received every day by landlords in Ireland. That was not an altogether honourable or straightforward action for the hon. Member to take, because he was a member of the Land Conference which drew up the terms.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The hon. Member is entirely wrong. The terms of the Land Conference Report are not the terms of the Land Act.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: The hon. Member acquiesced in the Land Act of 1903.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: That is another thing.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG said the hon. Member did so on the terms that it was framed to all intents and purposes on the lines laid down by the Conference, and for him now to throw aspersions on the Act of 1903 was not a worthy action for any Member of the House, and much less a Member on the front Ministerial Bench. The hon. Member asked for the passage of the Bill on three grounds: first, that two Plans of Campaign estates—the Clanricarde estate and the Lewis estate—had not yet been settled; secondly, because the voluntary system under which the evicted tenants' clause of the Act of 1903 had worked had broken down; and, thirdly, because it would end the disastrous civil war which had been raging in Ireland for years. On the first of these grounds he seriously asked the House of Commons to pass a compulsory Act, carrying the principle of compulsion to an extent which had never been dreamt of before in this or any other House of Commons, because of 135 tenants on the Clanricarde estate and thirty-five on the Lewis estate.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: If I mentioned these estates, I also said that there were hundreds of evicted farms of which the landlords would not allow even inspection.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG said they had to take it there were 135 on the Clanricarde estate, 35 on the Lewis estate, and hundreds of cases—say 200—elsewhere. He wished to point out that the Bill, so far as he understood, did not necessarily aim at being able to obtain the actual farm from which the tenant had been evicted, but at getting power compulsorily to acquire land in any part of Ireland to reinstate these tenants. If it was insisted that the real object of the Bill was to enable the Commissioners to evict the present holders of farms from which the eviction took place, his opposition to the Bill would be stronger than before. The hon. Member also informed them that the voluntary system had broken down; that he (Mr. Craig) would deal with in a moment, when he considered the Bill as a whole. At the end of his speech the hon. Member, after saying he would not make a peroration, perorated on the West of Ireland, where he said he spent a certain part of his holidays when he was last in Ireland, and he drew a picture of the conditions there which, if anything could, would go to prove the complete and entire success of the Land Act of 1903. He said he had not seen even a dirty school child during that time. He did not know whether the dirtiness or cleanliness of a school child could be directly or indirectly connected with the Land Act, but if it could, that, and the pleasing picture the hon. Member drew of the prosperity in that part of Ireland, seemed to be in favour of leaving the Act as it stood, and giving it a fair chance of carrying out what it was intended to do. To leave the hon. Member and return to the debate, what the ordinary man in the street, whether English, Scottish, or even Irish, understood by the evicted tenants question was the problem of restoring either to their original holdings, or to some suitable holdings in another part of the country, those tenants who had lost their tenancies during what was known as the Land War in Ireland, either on one of the Plan of Campaign estates, or on what had been described as outposts. It was these tenants, and these tenants alone, that the majority of the Members of the House of Commons had their minds fixed upon when the Evicted Tenants Clause of 1903 came to be discussed. If any evidence were needed he could read numerous extracts from the speeches made in 1903. He would give two only. The hon. and learned Member for Waterford said on the Second Reading of the Bill—

> "I ask the House can they expect that we should accept as a final settlement of the Irish land question any scheme which excludes from its operation the men who have risked and lost everything in the land struggle."

That showed that even in the mind of the Leader of the Nationalist Party the evicted tenants he thought it his duty to champion were those wounded soldiers of the land war, as they had so frequently been called. The hon. and learned Member for Waterford in the same speech said—

> "Their number is very small, and the amount required would be very little. When the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose introduced an Evicted Tenants Bill he proposed £100,000, and as time had gone on the area affected by this question has undoubtedly diminished, and if £100,000 was all that was necessary then, a considerably less sum would be all that would be necessary now."

Again, the hon. Member for East Mayo said the question was a small one from the point of view of the numbers affected. When the Evicted Tenants Act was passed in 1894 there were, he said, about 800 of these people, but only 400 families remained to be dealt with. The whole question, said the hon. Member for Mayo, could be dealt with in a generous way with £200,000 at the outside, in a manner which would strike the imagination of Ireland, and smooth the passage of the Land Bill. He made these quotations to show that at any rate when the Land Purchase Act was introduced and discussed on its Second Reading in 1903 the prevailing idea on all sides of the House was that it was intended primarily to deal with those tenants who had lost their holdings either on Plan of Campaign estates or for some political cause. He was quite free to admit that the Act as finally passed into law went much further than had been anticipated by hon. Members below the gangway or had even been asked for by them. So far as he could recollect, it was practically never asked by any hon. Member below the gangway that the Bill should apply to anyone except the so-called wounded soldiers of the land war. But, either rightly or wrongly—and he thought this was a very debateable question—the Act was made to apply to a much larger class. It was made to apply to practically all tenants who had been evicted within twenty-five years before the passing of the Act. A considerable amount of time might be spent in discussing the desirability of that extension, but as it became the law it would be a waste of time to enter into it now. There was at any rate complete agreement that the wounded soldier of the land war should be forthwith admitted to the benefit of the Act, and as soon as it could reasonably be done he should be reinstated in his holding or provided with a new holding. That being the case, he thought the question which the House of Commons had to deal with now was simply this: Had the reinstatement of the evicted tenants been prosecuted up to the present with reasonable diligence? Were there any circumstances, in fact, which rendered necessary the passage of the present Bill? That was really the question they had to study. He thought that after a dispassionate study of that question the House of Commons, if left to itself, would say that great progress had been made. As a matter of fact, the tenants clauses had worked well. They had worked with much greater rapidity and smoothness than the more important part of the Act—the purchase clauses. One-third of the total claims which had been admitted by the Government had already been settled. Seeing that the Act had only been in force for three years, he did not think any reasonable person could call that a bad result. They heard that out of seventeen Plan of Campaign estates, fifteen had been completely settled and only two were left. In the speeches in support of the Bill those two estates were held up as a justification for the extraordinary powers which the Government were seeking to obtain from the House of Commons. He did not think that was right. One of the reasons which Members of the Opposition put forward for their objection to the Bill was that the House of Commons was not given any opportunity of judging of the class of cases which the Government were going to admit to its benefits. Any Plan of Campaign tenant, he admitted, ought to be reinstated, and if these other cases were *bona fide* cases they should be admitted too. But what were they to think of the fact that there had been 8,000 applications, only 3,000 of which the Commissioners thought fit to be reinstated? The House of Commons ought to be allowed an opportunity of judging of the way in which this power of picking and choosing had been exercised by the Commissioners. He believed the Chief Secretary had admitted that the reason why he would not grant the return asked for was that it would bring down endless trouble both on his own head and on the heads of the Estates Commissioners. Surely the House was entitled to ask for further information on this subject, as that before them they could not make head nor tail of. The House should not be asked to pass a Bill of this magnitude on such meagre details. He thought he could show from the Report of the Commissioners that the Bill was not necessary. Paragraph 41 showed that they had communicated with 1,752 owners of untenanted land; and although they were not informed how they had communicated, he supposed it would be by means of printed letters. He would have thought, however, that it would have been better to have sent down an emissary or inspector, who by conversation might endeavour to arrive at some arrangement or understanding. Although the figures at first sight seemed against them, they could not be said to be unsatisfactory, because if all the 1,752 had come into negotiation the Estates Commissioners would only have been able to take a little land from each. Out of that number 579 failed to reply and 265 refused to deal, 156 wrote saying they were going to sell the lands on their own account, 372 said their land was demesne land, which they could not be expected to sell, 120 were still corresponding with the Estates Commissioners, and 260 had expressed their willingness to sell. Out of the 260 only 147 had yet sent particulars and were in negotiation, while ten had sold 4,846 acres. Supposing the average holding of the ten was the same as that of the 260 who had expressed their willingness to sell, the Commissioners would have 125,000 acres of land to supply to evicted tenants, which would be 30,000 or 40,000 acres more than they required. Did those figures show any necessity for compulsion? They pointed in exactly the opposite direction, and there was nothing to show that the Act had failed in the short time it had been in operation. Hon. Members below the gangway had shown much concern over the Plan of Campaign tenants, but Clause 40 of the Report showed that they had not much sympathy among the tenants in Ireland. In that clause it was stated that proceedings were pending for the sale to the Commissioners of about 80,000 acres of land, but they had been told that it would be difficult to obtain it because it was needed for the enlargement of small holdings, and the people of the localities would strongly object to part with it to meet the requirements of the evicted tenants, nor would the evicted tenants be willing to take land at a distance from their former homes in places where they would meet with opposition. Although he thought it was desirable that the evicted tenants should be restored, he held that the Government had every right to insist that the evicted tenants should not be too particular as to where the land they got was situated. No necessity had been shown for increasing the power at present vested in the Estates Commissioners, and if they admitted that the evidence went to show that progress had not been sufficiently rapid he entirely dissented from the view that compulsory powers of any such far-reaching character as were proposed in the Bill should be given to any set of men. There was not a single instance in the English law where such powers as were proposed in this Bill had been conferred on any person. It would be against the instincts of any Englishman to put a person in a position to be able to say, "I require so much of your land," and, whether a man liked it or not, to take it, and also to fix the price. No valid reason had been adduced to show why the procedure incorporated in the Labourers Act should not be adopted, and the matter settled by an independent tribunal. The Estates Commissioners and the Vice-President had always been great champions of the tenants, and the link between them was very apparent. But the landlords had no confidence in them. The Vice-President had waxed warm in defending them, but the fact remained that the landlords of Ireland did not regard them as excellent Commissioners, and that was an end of it. No amount of heat on the part of the Vice-President would alter that fact. Therefore he would ask the Chief Secretary whether it was right to confer upon such persons, who did not enjoy the truest confidence of both parties, such extraordinary powers as this Bill proposed to give them. The first consideration in the appointment of an arbitrator must surely be whether that person was trusted by the two parties who were at variance, and to put this power into the hands of a person who was admittedly lacking the confidence of the parties was extraordinary, not to say outrageous. He also agreed with those who had spoken from that side of the House that from the point of view of the two Commissioners the most important effect of the Bill was that it improved their *status* and rendered them immune from all discussion in that House. Surely in a matter of such extraordinary difficulty, and on questions which generated great heat from time to time, and in the past had strained all sections of the community, it was admittedly not desirable that the decision of these matters should be left in the hands of two men who were removed absolutely from the criticisms of Parliament. He did not know any similar case where such a proceeding was even suggested, and he was quite sure that such a proposal, had it come from the Party to which he belonged, would have been received with shouts of derision from other Parties in the House. But because it came from the Chief Secretary, whose knowledge of Ireland extended back for some six months, apparently the House of Commons was going to carry out what, in his opinion, was a most uncalled-for and unnecessary proceeding — namely, the removal of these two questions from the criticism of the House. He would oppose the Second Reading of the Bill. He was quite certain that any hastening of the restoration of the evicted tenants would excite friction, that passion would be raised, not only among the landlords, but among the tenants, which would more than counterbalance any advantage given by the speed by which the question would be settled. He did not believe it would be settled the more quickly if compulsory powers were given. He believed the whole question would be settled in another six years, that the two-thirds to be restored would be restored in a shorter time than the one-third which had already been restored, and that therefore he was well within the mark in saying the whole thing would be settled in six years. He asked the House to say that it was not at all an unreasonable time to clear up that great blot on the land system which they all agreed in 1903 should be got rid of as soon as possible.

*MR. SHEEHAN (Cork County, Mid.), said the argument had been advanced by hon. Members from Ulster that the Government were creating a precedent by introducing the element of compulsion into this measure; but must not a precedent be created some time, and was it not the duty of this House to legislate for necessities? There had been undoubtedly a breakdown in the voluntary clauses of the Land Act of 1903, in so far at least as they affected the position of the evicted tenants, and in the measure before the House the Government were only endeavouring to carry out the honourable compact to which the late Government were pledged to restore the evicted tenants without any needless delay. The right hon. Member for South Dublin had asked for some concrete evidence of this breakdown, for something beyond mere generalities, for some individual action which would justify the action of the Government in bringing in this measure. Before he was done he hoped by chapter and book to furnish the right hon. Gentleman with the information he required. The underlying principle of this Bill was that land should be acquired compulsorily for the reinstatement of evicted tenants, and, speaking from a wide personal experience of the working of the Land Act of 1903, he had no hesitation whatever in stating that unless the compulsory principle was preserved in the measure they would never see the evicted tenants reinstated in their lifetime. No matter what might be said to the contrary by those who were concerned in maintaining the sanctity of property, the only cure for the present evil state of the evicted tenants' question was compulsion. A noble Lord stated in another place the other day that he would not object to compulsion if the necessity for it could be proved, but that he thought the question could be settled if the Estates Commissioners gave enough for the land. He challenged that assumption. He was well aware that no matter what price was given for land they could not induce certain landlords to part with it for the purpose of providing the evicted tenants with houses and holdings once again. A large proportion of grabbers, to his own knowledge, could not be got to give up their unlawful possessions unless the strong arm of compulsion was applied to them. That was no mere bald assertion. He could sustain it by facts. For the past three years he had been hon. secretary of a body in the county of Cork known as the Cork Advisory Committee. That body was established and initiated by the senior Member for Cork City, and its main object was to facilitate land purchase negotiations between landlords and tenants, and to endeavour so far as possible to aid in the speedy reinstatement of evicted tenants. The committee was composed of the leading public men in the county. The chairman of the county council and most of its members took an active interest in its work, and he was happy to say that through the mediation of the committee a very large number of sales indeed were successfully negotiated, and owing to its influence and the standard of prices which it set up the tenants in Cork County had obtained better terms under the Land Act than had been got in any other part of the country. By directly approaching the landlords and their agents, and reasoning with them in a fair and friendly manner, they had also been successful in getting a large number of evicted tenants reinstated in their old homesteads. But their difficulty did not lie primarily with the landlords or their agents. His experience was that the difficulty of reinstatement, in Cork County at least, lay more with the grabbers, who refused to budge unless they were allowed to dictate their own terms and who really acted as if they thought they had the Government behind them in this matter. He hoped that these unscrupulous and inhuman adventurers would soon learn that there was at least one Irish Secretary who would give them short shrift in their robbery of the people's rights. Let him quote from his own personal experience on this aspect of the question. A few months ago, with an inspector of the Estates Commissioners, he waited upon a landlord named Mr. Robert Pratt, who had property in his constituency from which two persons had been evicted. Negotiations for purchase by the tenants had been practically concluded on the Estate—the only stumbling block in the way being that tenants would not sign the agreements until the grabbers were out of the holdings and the evicted tenants rooted into them. The landlord was quite willing that the evicted tenants should be reinstated. In the presence of the Estates inspector and himself he expressed himself to that effect, but they were all in this dilemma—how was it going to be brought about? The Estates inspector asked Mr. Pratt if he had any objection to his interviewing the grabbers, and he said he had not, so both the inspector and he (Mr. Sheehan) proceeded to the residences of these people. At the first house at which they called they did not find the grabber himself at home, a man named Buttimer, but they met his brother, who gave them a cold and surly reception, and who would not have anything to say to them beyond that he was aware that his brother would not give him the grabbed farm on any account. He was subsequently informed on most reliable authority that the grabber himself said he was sorry he was not before them, as he would have set his dogs on them and kicked them out of the place. He put it to the House whether anything short of the use, and the sharp use, of the rod of compulsion should be applied to such a black-hearted buccaneer as that. They proceeded from that man's house to that of a lady named Mrs. McGivern, whom they found squatted down in her coach-house engaged in the useful occupation of cutting seed potatoes. She was a stolid lady who knew how to keep a closed mouth—in this quality at least she was a pleasing departure from the rest of her sex. The Estates inspector explained the object of his visit. It did not ruffle in the slightest the calm of her sphinx-like stolidity. She would discuss nothing with them until her son was present, and he was away from home. The landlord had informed them that he had allowed this lady into the evicted holding at a largely reduced rent as a yearly tenant, on the payment of a sum of £50. The inspector asked her if she would give up the holding if she got her £50 back, and the only time during the interview that she showed any life or spirit was when she answered with temper that she would not, or if she got ten times £50. There were two cases in which the landlord was most anxious that the grabbers should be got out somehow or anyhow—as a matter of fact, he had agreed to the sale to the other tenants, excluding these on conditions that the Estates Commissioners should declare the remainder of the property an estate under the Land Act, carrying the bonus with it. Did not these examples alone prove that they could not now solve this question without compulsion? Mr. Buttimer and Mrs. McGivern were branches of the same family, and later on the inspector and himself visited another member of this interesting group of relatives, all of whom seemed to have made a trade or profession of grabbing. The grabber's name was Chambers and the holding was on the Hassett estate. The story of that eviction formed one of the tragedies of the agrarian struggle. The former tenant, a man named Kelleher, lost hundreds of pounds on the farm, but notwithstanding all his industry and efforts—and he had it on the most trustworthy authority that he was an industrious man—still he was unable to meet the exorbitant demands of the landlord, and being himself a ruined and broken man, and bowed down with the worries and anxieties of life, what wonder that his mind gave way and that he committed suicide, leaving a widow and helpless young family behind him. His friends assisted her for some time, but they could not support her for ever, and the inevitable fate befell her. She became a victim to landlordism, and she and her little ones were cast on the roadside. The miserable plight of the widow and her family did not weigh on the conscience of the land grabber. The wretched fellow, Chambers, took it at a rent reduced by one half or more, and he had actually filed an agreement with the Estates Commissioners to purchase the holding, although Mrs. Kelleher had a number of sons, now grown to manhood's years, working as agricultural labourers, who would be well able to manage the farm if they were put back on it. He had placed the whole circumstances of the case repeatedly before the Estates Commissioners, as he thought it one of the harshest cases of eviction which ever came under his notice, and he begged of them not to sanction a sale to Chambers. The only reply he got to his communications was the usual printed form of acknowledgment; and if he put a Question down to the Chief Secretary he dared say he would get the usual stereotyped reply that the matter would be inquired into in due course. The inspector did not meet Chambers himself, but he met one of his sons who laughed at the idea of their being asked to leave their comfortable residence and splendid farm. He said they would not go on any account. He wanted to know whether a man of that type, who filched the widow's and the orphans' portion, deserved any sympathy from humane and Christian people, and whether if strict justice were done to him he should not be lashed out of the home he had desecrated by his presence, without a penny of compensation. He could multiply these cases over and over again, but he thought he had cited enough to prove right up to the hilt the necessity for compulsion. Now he passed from that aspect of the case to another which was agitating the minds of thousands of evicted tenants in all parts of the country at the present time—the large number of applications, roughly speaking 3,000, which had been rejected by the Commissioners. Whilst he had no doubt that there were a good number of applications which could not stand the test of any honest investigation, still it appeared to him, at least, an impossible proposition that, for instance, in the county of Cork out of the 957 applications received, only 186 tenants or their representatives should be considered as suitable for reinstatement. That meant that 771 claims in one county alone were to be thrown overboard on the mere reports of a body of inspectors, the vast majority of whom were not and could not be drawn in sympathy with the evicted tenants, as they were from the landowning class. Nothing on earth could convince him that those 771 applications from his own county were rightly or reasonably rejected. He had received a wire from Mr. Daniel O'Connor, chairman of the Cork Evicted Tenants' Association, which read—

> "Evicted tenants repudiate official report of the Estates Commissioners on the evicted tenants question as unjust and bitterly disappointing. They protest against unsympathetic and partisan landlords' inspectors rejecting claims which have been publicly recognised as just. An impartial public investigation demanded."

Hon. Members could see from that that the report of the Estates Commissioners had driven the evicted tenants into a condition of mind bordering upon panic and despair. He had glanced through the reasons why such a large number of applications were rejected by the Commissioners, and he would claim the indulgence of the House whilst he examined a few of them. One of the reasons for rejection was that "applicants voluntarily surrendered their holdings or sold their interest in them." What did this voluntary surrender mean? An unfortunate tenant found himself unable to pay the gross rack-rent put upon him—he saw nothing but the workhouse or starvation and ruin staring him in the face if he were evicted, and he thought it better perhaps to leave quietly with something in his pocket from the landlord for his voluntary surrender rather than be thrown out without a penny between himself and his family and utter poverty. And his experience amounted to this: voluntary surrenders and the selling of their interests by tenants took place at a time when the national movement in Ireland was ruined by internal dissensions, when the agrarian agitation was more or less at a standstill, and when these unfortunate and helpless men were thrown back on their own resources, with nothing to live on in the present and nothing to hope for from the future. Could one wonder, when such conditions prevailed, that these unfortunate waifs of fortune and of circumstance should succumb to the immediate temptations of necessity and of hunger, and sell their birthright for a mess of pottage? He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman who had charge of this Bill, and whose humane disposition was recognised on all sides of the House, would see to it that the door of hope should not be rigidly shut upon these wretched men and their families, who surrendered their holdings or signed away their birthright when the gates of promise seemed to be have been for ever barred against them and theirs. He could mention several cases in which evicted tenants, cast down to the depths by the gloom and the despair of the time, sold their interests for any paltry consideration which would bring even the most temporary relief to themselves and their families, and in his view it would be a grave moral wrong-doing—it would be the blackest inhumanity, if in the great scheme of pacification which the Land Act of 1903 must eventually consummate, the present Government were to shelter themselves behind the miserable legalities of the question, and doom a large body of families to irredeemable despair and misery simply because, when ruin was around them and hope itself was dead, when perhaps the cry of their little ones for bread was day and night ringing in their ears, they gave way to the temptations of the moment. Let him just briefly mention one case, that of the man who sent the telegram he had read a little while before. That man, Daniel O'Connor, the Chairman of the Cork Evicted Tenants Association, was evicted from a farm near the city of Cork by the landlord, a Mr. Bass. He had expended over a thousand pounds in hard cash in improvements and so forth. At the time of his eviction he only owed one year's rent, and shortly after his eviction and before the period of redemption had expired, he was offered something like £600 for his interest in the farm, but considering it value for several hundreds more he declined the offer, believing in his positive right to the holding. In connection with certain proceedings which took place subsequent to the eviction O'Connor served a term of imprisonment, and a gentleman who came down from the north of

Ireland and took possession, on being informed of the circumstances of the eviction by the evicted tenant himself, immediately quitted the place. O'Connor was evicted because he refused to pay on principle what he believed to be a gross rack-rent, and he had the sympathy of the country with him at the time. The unfortunate man had a large and helpless young family dependent on him, and in the circumstances which he had already adumbrated he assigned to his landlord his interest on the holding on which he had expended £1,000 of his own money, for which he had refused £600, subsequent to his eviction, and from which a grabber who appeared to possess what was somewhat rare amongst grabbers—a conscience—cleared out when he learnt the true facts of the case. He put it to that House and to the Chief Secretary whether this was a case in which the Government should stand upon strictly legal rights, or whether, on the other hand, they should not deal with this and other cases of a similar nature on the broad grounds of humanity and moral rights—take these men and their families after years of suffering on the highway of the world, mend their broken and wasted lives, and set them on their feet once more, with something of hope in their hearts, by placing them back in their old homes, and providing them with a fresh and fruitful start in life. Another class barred out by the Report of the Estates Commissioners were the representatives of evicted tenants who might be unsuitable to work land from want of farming experience, or were otherwise sufficiently provided for. He questioned the statutory right and power of the Estates Commissioners to reject applications on that ground alone. If parties were the representatives of *bona fide* evicted tenants coming under Section 2 of the Land Act of 1903, it should not be within the power or the discretion of any Government Department or administrative body to reject the claims of those who were specifically mentioned in an Act of Parliament which purported to deal finally with this great festering evil in the social system. Let him give a personal illustration of how unfairly and unjustly this exclusion might work out. He had the terrible experience, when he was a lad of six or seven years, of going through all the dreadful horrors of an Irish eviction. His father was ruthlessly evicted in 1880 by one of the worst types of landlord he had ever read or heard of, and the memory of that frightful eviction scene was ineffaceably stamped upon his mind—the landlord gloating in person over the misery and anguish of his unfortunate victims, the roof-tree under which he was born set on fire, and the home in which his tender years were passed burnt to the very ground; the heartlessness and cruelty of the whole proceedings, every incident, stood clearly out in his recollection at that moment, and would remain for ever with him, even when other events and other crises in a rather chequered career had faded into the background of time. And it would show how far they had advanced on the road to a settlement of this question, with all its tears, and all its blood and misery, when he stated that his father did not owe one penny of rent at the time of his eviction; his lease had merely expired, the landlord wanted the farm for himself, and out he had to go. Anyone who knew anything of Ireland knew that the love of the land could never be uprooted from the heart of an Irish peasant, that the early ties and the old associations had ever a potent spell over him, and though years and distance might separate him from the home of his fathers, there was ever the clinging fondness for the old spot where he was born, the spot which was ever home to him. And he knew how when the Act of 1903 was passed his father longingly looked forward to the day which would see him back in his own holding once more. It was the dream and the hope of his few remaining years on earth—a dream and a hope which were doomed to be disappointed, because the evicted tenants clauses of the Act were insufficient in themselves without compulsion. His father died last year a disappointed man. What he wanted to know was, were his representives going to be barred out from their inherent and prescriptive right to the portion of the land which was owned by their forefathers for centuries merely because they might be otherwise sufficiently provided for? To exclude them would be an outrage on the principles of the Act of 1903, and he was certain that there were several others, representatives of real *bona fide* evicted tenants, who were in a similar position to that in which his family was placed. Much had been made of the question of pre-emption by the Ulster Members who had spoken. They did not want that principle to be applied by the State to landlords who did not wish to dispose of their untenanted land for the reinstatement of evicted tenants. But what about the cases of evicted tenants in the south of Ireland, against whom the landlords exercised the right of pre-emption given to them by the Act of 1881, and got the Land Commission to fix the purchase price of the tenant's interest, which in every case was less than one-half of what it would fetch in the open market? He observed that the Ulster Unionist Members had nothing to say to that, probably because it did not affect their constituencies. He understood that the right of pre-emption did not exist where the Ulster custom prevailed. But let them take the famous Watergrass Hill eviction case, where the tenant, Edmond Murphy, wanted to sell by public auction his interest in his farm. The landlord stepped in and exercised the right of pre-emption, under which the Land Commission would only give Murphy something like £400 for what was worth over £800. Murphy rightly refused to accept this, the rattling manhood of the district gathered round him, and when it was sought to evict him twenty-three brave young men made a fight for the homes of the people as heroic as any that was ever made in the whole history of the agrarian struggle, a fight which found its echo even in that House, and for which those who participated in it went through their period of suffering and imprisonment; and what he now wanted to know from the Chief Secretary was whether this man Murphy was to be regarded as an evicted tenant under the Bill or otherwise? He also referred to the case of Cornelius O'Sullivan, of Kilnaclasha, near Skibbereen, who was evicted from his holding under exactly similar circumstances—the right of pre-emption having been exercised by a very reverend gentleman of the Protestant Episcopalian Church. Were these men going to be shut out from the benefits of this Bill? There was one matter in which he was in agreement with those who had spoken from the Unionist Benches, and that was in the demand for the publication of those evicted tenants whose claims were admitted and those whose applications were rejected. The evicted tenants were loudly clamouring for this information themselves. It would have to be known sooner or later—it would tend to discontent and dissatisfaction quite as much by being kept back as by being made known; and he thought it would be prudent for the right hon. Gentleman to make the information public at the earliest possible moment. In conclusion, he wished the Chief Secretary luck with his Bill. He had been rather unfortunate in dealing with other Irish questions, but he sincerely trusted he would be able to get this measure safely through Parliament. He would, however, earnestly appeal to the right hon. Gentleman, if he wished for success, not to go in for any half-settlements or to whittle down the evicted tenants claims, and to have done once and for all with those pettifogging quibbles about legal rights and voluntary surrenders and so forth. Let him leave these things to the Schoolmen of the Law; this was a Bill which if it were to serve its purpose should be dealt with from the heart—there should be a little of the soul of humanity in it. Let him in God's name make it a generous settlement, let no man be excluded who had a shadow of a reasonable claim, let there be fair assurance given that those whose claims were rejected should have some independent and impartial investigation of them, and if he did that he would bring blessings on his own head and joy and happiness to hearts that were long cankered with care, and comfort to bodies that were starved for need of nourishment.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.) said he could not claim that he represented an agricultural constituency, but he had the honour of sitting in the House when the Land Act of 1903 was passed, and he listened carefully to all the particulars of the Bill and to the pledges of the Government of the day in regard to the evicted tenants. If he remembered rightly, the National Party made it a condition of the passage of that Bill that this matter should receive careful and favourable attention. He thought he was right in saying that the Bill would never have passed had that pledge not been given. He could not forget that during the agrarian war in Ireland, when Members of Parliament were being put in prison by the dozen and people were being shot on the roadside, the Unionist Party opposed the scheme of land purchase, and for about eighteen years that trouble and turmoil was kept up in Ireland until public opinion got so hard that this very policy, the Land League policy, was swallowed in one gulp. If that was the experience of eighteen years of administration from one political Party in the State, why should this opposition to the restoration of the evicted tenants to their holdings be proposed for the purpose of carrying on another agrarian war of perhaps less magnitude, but still of not less importance? He could not for the life of him see why, when they were all agreed on the fact that the pledge given for the restoration of evicted tenants was a matter for consideration, they could not give a Second Reading to this Bill, and then go into the different clauses and try and amend it so as to meet the views of those who conscientiously objected to it. He thought the principal objection was taken to its compulsory clauses. The hon. Member for South Antrim had complained of the partiality of the Estates Commissioners and pointed out that it was due to the fact that they were strong advocates of the tenant farmers. When Mr. Bailey and Mr. Finucane were appointed the Government believed they would carry out impartially the duties Parliament put upon them. Did the hon. Member for South Antrim contend that those two Commissioners should be displaced for two landlord representatives? If that were done the war in Ireland would be much greater than it was now. No one could regard Ireland with any degree of sympathy or without prejudice or free from any Party considerations or bigotry without admitting that it was possible to deal not only generously but sincerely and honestly with questions such as this for the purpose of trying to bring peace and contentment into the homes of these poor people who, it was admitted, had sacrificed for a principle the homes which they had hitherto had. He could not see what object was to be gained by rejecting this Bill on Second Reading. He thought the Member for South Dublin might have used his influence with the Unionist Members for Ulster to allow the Bill to have a Second Reading, seeing that it was admitted that they could not go on ignoring the claims of the evicted tenants. They could then have put their heads together with a view to amending the measure during its further stages. He regretted that the right hon. Member for Dover was not present, because he was quite sure he would have supported the principle of the Bill if not its details. He would be the first to acknowledge his pledge to the House in passing his great land scheme. If they were to have cattle-raiding stopped and a cessation of Questions on the Order Paper of the House, which were not honourable or creditable to the country, let them take the remedy and as far as possible put an end to the disturbances and grievances by legislation which could do nobody any harm and which certainly would bring contentment and happiness to these people. It was a regrettable thing that Party spirit was sometimes brought into matters in regard to Ireland on which they could agree to differ. There were important questions of general interest and concern to Ireland in regard to which they should endeavour to mete out justice to all parts of the country impartially and without prejudice. Unless he threw his conscience to the wind and bowed down to every criticism that was made he could not see how any reasonable or sensible man who heard the Land Act of 1903 being discussed and knew the conditions under which it was passed could vote against the Second Reading of this Bill, which was a continuity of the policy of the Unionist Government of that day in respect to which a distinct pledge was made. He did not say that Amendments could be introduced to meet the landlords of Ireland, because that was an impossibility. He did not complain of the hon. Members for North Armagh and South Antrim speaking up for the landlords, but he did complain of the manner in which others who did not represent the landlords were being attacked for carrying out their conscientious objections. The Bill was needed in Ireland. It would have a tendency to allay the feeling that at present existed in the country, and would restore these poor people to homes which they had sacrificed for the sake of a principle. For all these reasons he supported the Second Reading.

MR. FFRENCH (Wexford, S.) said that two or three days ago he asked a Question in reference to a case which came under his notice, and the reply he got was that the landlord was in communication with the Estates Commissioners and that he was willing to sell the whole of his estate to the evicted tenants. The landlords had asked too high a price for the land. He believed that the last time the tenants asked to be restored to their homes the landlords asked twenty-seven and a half years purchase on the old rack rents. That was one of the cases which would require compulsion. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would take note of it, and also that it would not escape the notice of the Estates Commissioners.

*MR. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool) said he fully admitted that during the debates in 1903 on the Land Purchase Act it was agreed on all hands that everything should be done in reason to reinstate the evicted tenants. He did not know that all evicted tenants should be reinstated; but it was understood that all the evicted tenants on the Plan of Campaign estates should be reinstated. [NATIONALIST cheers.] He was glad that hon. Members below the gangway agreed with him, but surely they would not contend that they had not been mostly reinstated. There were only two outstanding estates at present, namely, the Clanricarde estate and the Lewis estate. He could support compulsion if it was only to be applied to the Plan of Campaign estates, but this Bill went further than that and said that compulsion might be applied to any landlord or new tenant in order that land might be supplied to an evicted tenant. That was going very far indeed. The Vice-President of the Board of Agriculture for Ireland, speaking in the debates in 1894, said he would not only not consent to any measure containing a compulsory clause, but that he would not vote for any measure to turn out a new tenant and put in another man. Now the hon. Member had put his name on the back of a Bill which proposed to do what in 1894 he said he would never consent to do. From the outsider's point of view the most objectionable part of the Bill was that in regard to the method of ascertaining what compensation was to be given to a landlord or a new tenant if he was deprived of his land. He could not understand why hon. Members below the gangway should say that a man who bought an article should at the same time fix the price. [A NATIONALIST MEMBER: Not for himself.] Yes, for himself. The Estates Commissioners went round and saw a piece of land which would suit evicted tenants, and they made an offer of so much per acre. If the landlord in that case said he was not getting enough, to whom did the landlord apply for arbitration? He could not appeal to any impartial tribunal; he had to appeal to the Commissioners themselves. It was not fair to put such a duty on the Commissioners. [A NATIONALIST MEMBER: They were appointed by a Tory Government.] It did not matter whether they were appointed by a Tory or a Liberal Government, or by hon. Gentlemen below the gangway themselves. He could not imagine why that provision had been put in the Bill, and he hoped that in Committee the Government would accept some reasonable Amendment in order that there might be an impartial arbiter to judge when these compulsory powers were to be put in force. He could not understand the position taken up now by the government and hon. Members below the Gangway with respect to the landlords in Ireland. Up to and including 1903 the policy pursued on both sides of the House was that the tenants should become freeholders and that the landlords should be allowed to retain their houses and demesnes. That was, under the circumstances, a wise policy, but it had been changed. In the Act of 1906 powers were given to the rural district councils, subject to appeal, to the Local Government Board, to compulsorily acquire untenanted land for the erection of labourers cottages. He was not discussing whether that was good or bad, but there they had the first step towards depriving the landlord who had sold his estate to the tenants of part of the untenanted land. Now this Bill was brought in to take away compulsorily more untenanted land from the landlord in order to put the evicted tenants upon it. It seemed to him very unwise on the part of hon. Members below the gangway to support that policy. Surely it was in the interest of Ireland that they should do all they could to keep the late landlords in the country and not drive them away. After all, they had got the money for their estates and it was desirable that they should be kept in the country to spend the money there, instead of spending it in England or France or some other country. There was an agitation in favour of taking away the sporting rights from the landlords. If such a policy had been pursued in the past in Scotland they would not have seen the amount of money pouring into that country every year from Englishmen and others who did not belong to the country. Hon. Members below the gangway should do all they could to encourage rich people to come to Ireland to enjoy the beauties of the country and the sport to be found there, instead of whittling away what was left to the old landlords and preventing them from letting their places to rich people from abroad who would bring money which would benefit the country generally.

*MR. JOHN ROCHE (Galway, E.) said one might naturally ask why they were now discussing the question of the restoration of the evicted tenants in view of the pledges which were given from the Treasury Bench four years ago. It was stated then that the question would be settled in a satisfactory and generous manner, and were it not for those pledges the Act of 1903 would not have passed through the House of Commons at all. How had the pledge been kept in regard to the Clanricarde and the Lewis estates, both of which were in his neighbourhood? After a lapse of four years not one tenant had been reinstated on either of those estates. It was impossible to deal with Lord Clanricarde except by compulsion. He had refused either to sell his estate as a whole, or to entertain the question of the restoration of the evicted tenants to their former holdings, or to sell for their use the untenanted land on the estate. What was the spirit in which the statement made by the Chief Secretary on the First Reading of the Bill was received by Lord Clanricarde? Immediately after that statement—which was to the effect that after careful inquiry he was convinced that he would require compulsory powers—appeared in print the present agent of Lord Clanricarde summoned a meeting of the planters with the object of trying to get them to pledge themselves that they would resist any legislation which might be introduced. Strange to say, several of the planters told the agent there and then that they would be only too delighted to see those powers conferred on the Government on the morrow, and they would be very glad to take compensation to clear out. Immediately after that the agent attempted to get them to sign a document pledging them to resist this legislation, but he failed. His next move was to attempt to split up the untenanted land on the estate, and plant tenants of his own choice upon it, so that when the Bill was passed there would not be a perch of untenanted land on the estate to provide holdings for the evicted tenants. His last move was that he had offered to change the tenancy of the planters who were only future tenants into judicial. The agent had, in fact, endeavoured to stop every possible gap, and to prevent by every means in his power the application of the powers given under this Bill to that estate. Therefore, by what possible means could this question of the Clanricarde estate be settled unless compulsory powers were given to the Estates Commissioners to deal with it? They had in the parish in which he resided about fifty-six families evicted on the Clanricarde estate, and never more than about seven planters. He could tell the House that during the past twenty years more than half the number of planters upon the estate, after enjoying holdings made up of nine or ten ordinary holdings grouped together, had walked away without paying a penny of rent. One of those planters, a gentleman named Flower, got nine of those holdings, and a house was built for him on the farm, costing about £400. He stopped there for about three or four years, and during that time not one four-footed beast of any sort or description did he put upon the land. Mr. Flower paid no rent, and when he was pressed for it, being unable to pay, he thought the best thing for him to do was to clear out. He knew himself, from personal experience and from information he had received through many channels, that the vast majority of the planters on the Clanricarde estate would be almost as much pleased as the evicted tenants to see the Bill passed in its present form. They were afraid to be seen talking to an inspector. They knew very well that the Estates Commissioners had no power whatsoever to compensate them unless they were assured that they could put the evicted tenants on the land, which the planters would be only too glad to give up if they had compensation. As regarded the Lewis estate, there were about twenty-five Plan of Campaign tenants on that estate. During the time of the late Government, Mr. Stewart, one of the estates inspectors, who, if partial at all, would lean towards the landlords, called upon the representatives of that estate. Immediately afterwards a letter appeared in a Tory newspaper signed by one of the Lewises, complaining that Mr. Stewart had had the audacity to call upon him to ask if he was willing to reinstate the evicted tenants or to sell the estate. Mr. Stewart, he believed, had to write more than one letter in defence of his action. Some time afterwards the Lewises began to think that it might be better for themselves if they adopted the Act. They saw that a good many landlords in the neighbourhood were doing this and they agreed to an inspection. The estate was valued, and after the report had been sent to the Estates Commissioners they wrote to Mr. Lewis offering him the price put upon the estate by the valuer. The result was that Mr. Lewis did not condescend even to acknowledge the letter, and so things had gone on up to the present time. He lived in the district and in the Plan of Campaign days he took his part in that fight. For that struggle he did not repudiate nor would he ever repudiate his responsibility. It was a struggle on behalf of the evicted tenants, and he should be prepared to go through the whole of it over again under similar circumstances. The real cause of that struggle would probably never be known to the public. There were in the district nine landlords, and in that bad year an appeal was made to them to try and meet their tenants. There had in that year been a bad drop in the quantity of produce and a bad fall in prices. Every one of the landlords with the exception of Lord Clanricarde and a Mrs. Lewis offered reductions of five and six shillings in the pound. Ultimately after an enormous amount of pressure Lord Clanricarde consented to give twenty per cent. reduction on the last gale of rent, if it were paid, which meant that not one single tenant could enjoy that twenty per cent. reduction, because they were not able to pay up that last gale. That was the real cause of the Plan of Campaign in that district. He hoped that these cases would be dealt with now in a drastic way and in such a manner as to get rid of the trouble, so that they might spend the few remaining years of their lives in peace and quietness.

MR. J. DEVLIN (Belfast, W.) thought that, in view of some of the speeches that had been made by some of the hostile Unionists from Ulster to this Bill, he as an Ulster Member himself ought to express his heartiest sympathy with its provisions. He was glad to find that so far as democratic Ulster was concerned the voice of both Protestant and Catholic had been heard in its favour. He was glad that a Unionist from Belfast and also a Nationalist from the same city had joined in supporting the measure. This subject was of the utmost importance in dealing with social and economic questions, because the evicted tenants difficulty bore largely upon those matters. It was, therefore, in his opinion, highly important that not only should they hear the opinions of landlords and tenants of Dublin Castle and potential judges, but also the opinion of those democrats in the House who claimed to know what democratic Ireland wanted, and to represent the democratic spirit of the country. One would imagine from the speeches on the Unionist Benches and also from the speech of the Vice-President of the Board of Agriculture that this was a question which affected alone the people of the West of Ireland; but it affected not alone that part of Ireland but also the North of Ireland, where it concerned a large and important portion of the population. It not only affected Connaught, Leinster and Munster, but also Ulster. He had looked over the claims which had been lodged by those who sought restoration to their homes, and he found that in Sligo there were nineteen legitimate applications recognised by the Estates Commissioners; in Roscommon there were twenty-five; in Clare forty-seven; in Leitrim, seventy-six; in King's County, five; in Westmeath, nine; in Fermanagh, fifty-six; and in Tyrone, forty-four. These figures showed that the question affected the whole of Ireland. There were twice as many evicted tenants in the counties of Fermanagh and Tyrone as in Sligo and Roscommon. They had heard a great deal of the motives which inspired the promoters of the Land Act of 1903, and of all who were connected with the passing of that great measure through Parliament. His colleagues had stated, and it had not been denied, that that Act would never have passed the House but for the definite pledge given that one of the primary purposes of this national agrarian reform should be to restore to their homes those brave men whose great sacrifices and sorrows had been instrumental in forcing the Government to introduce that Bill into the House of Commons. No doubt the abolition of the dual ownership in Irish land was the first purpose of the Act, but they on those benches, who had been, to some extent, responsible for the land agitation, through which these wounded soldiers fought and suffered—they, the representatives of these evicted tenants who had fought by their sides in hours of weary strife for the establishment of the principle of land ownership, would have been unworthy and contemptible, and subject to the scorn of every lover of liberty, if they had accepted any measure of land reform which did not place within its charter a provision that evicted tenants should be restored to their homes Having watched the progress of the measure of the right hon. Member for Dover, he had come to the conclusion that the representatives of officialdom and of the landlords were engaged not only in obstructing social work which was in the interests of Ireland, but in making the passing of useful legislation impossible. When they were not engaged in placing obstacles in the way of Irish progress and pacification, they had been engaged in the equally unholy task of preventing beneficial measures being passed through Parliament. It was not a high example. Unfortunately for legislation in that House, the more stupid a man was the more efficient he became for the purposes of obstruction. He was ashamed that any section of the people of Ireland should send men to Parliament who had no higher conception of their duty than to slander the reputation of their own countrymen. The Bill of 1903 was passed to give the Member for North Armagh thirty years purchase for his land. There would never have been a Land Act of that character if it were not for the sacrifices of the evicted tenants, upon whom the hon. Member now turned round. To his knowledge the hon. Member had offered his land to his tenants at twenty-one years purchase. He was sorry the hon. Member was not in the House—sorry for his (Mr. Devlin's) sake, but glad for the hon. Member's own sake—though he had no doubt that some intellectual giants among the hon. Member's friends, like the noble Lord, with triumphant mentality, would defend the most indefensible transaction known in the history of the Irish agrarian warfare. There was an agreement at the Land Conference, there was a Parliamentary arrangement in this House, there was, to use the classical expression of the hon. and learned Memnber for North Armagh, a *concordat* in regard to the last Act. It was the Land Conference, no doubt, that was instrumental in inducing the right hon. Member for Dover to introduce his measure. The *concordat* had now been in operation for a period of three years, and fewer than 1,000 evicted tenants had been restored to their homes. Two thousand still remained by the roadside, living under the most squalid conditions, in humble cabins erected for them by the generosity of their countrymen, while the Irish landlords had walked off with the swag. When he heard hon. Members talk of the British taxpayer he was amused to find it was not the Labour Members who wanted money for various reforms, it was not even the Unionist Members of that House; the gentleman who talked of the British taxpayer was the Irish Unionist landlord who had pocketed thirty years purchase for his land. When the rosy promises of the right hon. Member for Dover were made, after securing the Act for his landlord friends and letting them make the best bargain that ever was made in this world, he continued his task of reinstating the evicted tenants by issuing secret instructions to the Land Commissioners which prevented them from moving for eighteen months. The right hon. Gentleman disappeared from the stormy area of Irish politics. He left Parliament after being successfully impeached by his former secretary. He (Mr. Devlin) never expected to be a Minister or to be able to keep a private secretary, but he hoped if ever he occupied a position of honour and distinction he would not disappear after such an impeachment. The right hon. Member for South Dublin succeeded the right hon. Member for Dover as Chief Secretary. Challenged on the 14th February this year as to the promises made by his predecessor with regard to the evicted tenants he said that when he succeeded to the Irish Office he accepted the view of his predecessor as to the bargain in regard to the evicted tenants. As the right hon. Gentleman was not present, perhaps the representative of all the intellects, the noble Lord who sat on the second bench, would explain.

VISCOUNT TURNOUR (Sussex, Horsham): There is no explanation to give to the hon. Member while such flapdoodle is being talked.

MR. J. DEVLIN said flapdoodle was a matter of taste, and he had no doubt that when the noble Lord spoke everybody imagined a Daniel had come to judgment. He himself was endeavouring in his own humble way to express his views while suffering from the lack of that intellectual power so largely possessed by the noble Lord. The right hon. Member for South Dublin had said he agreed with the right hon. Member for Dover, and had come to the same conclusion which under the pressing circumstances of the moment was justified by the facts. The facts were that there was a conspiracy in Ireland on the part of the landlords, having secured that large payment, to keep the evicted tenants out of their holdings. A promise so given by every test of public honour must be kept, and they could not allow a little gang of Irish irreconcilables and stupid English lords who depended for their present power on the maintenance of landlordism to stop the way. Let the House remember that if any attempt was made in that or the other House to deny to the evicted tenants the right to enjoy the homes to which they were so passionately attached, dangers and difficulties might arise in Ireland. It would be easy to strike a match and light a torch in Ireland at the present time, but no one desired that. They all hoped that the intentions of Parliament would be carried out; that the right hon. Gentleman would see that the matter was settled on right lines to the satisfaction of Ireland. If it was it would bring eternal honour to the right hon. Gentleman and be a high and noble monument to the generosity of spirit with which he had approached this question. It was perfectly clear that something must be done in regard to the Clanricarde and the Lewis estates. Were they to be told that Lord Clanricarde, who was the greatest pest that ever cursed the country—a man who had driven the best peasants in the country beyond the sea; who had hunted men to the roadside and the workhouse—were they to be told that such men as he were to be allowed to remain as they were while wise and generous landlords had reinstated their evicted tenants, and that nothing was to be done? To permit that would be a gross national scandal. The sooner this remnant of the Irish landlords was made to feel that Parliament was not going to stand that condition of affairs under which the Irish taxpayers were compelled to keep an army of police, not to maintain social order, but to prevent the outrages that these men inspired, the sooner Lord Clanricarde and the owners of the Lewis estate would come to their senses. He did not know why compulsion should be so feared in that House. It existed in Australia and New Zealand—but not to restore evicted tenants, because they did not there exist. It was used there to take large tracts of land from their owners in order to use them for settlement as a matter of simple justice and for the general prosperity of the country. Surely compulsion ought to be recognised as a just principle when dealing with a great festering sore on the national body of Ireland. He, as one of the representatives from Ireland, had no hesitation in stating frankly that the Chief Secretary had approached the consideration of this question, not only in a statesmanlike, but in a bold and courageous manner. It might be because the right hon. Gentleman had approached it in this spirit that it would be met with opposition all the more intense. He trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would not be intimidated either by the violence of partisans, or by what might occur elsewhere. He was the Governor of Ireland, responsible for social order and for the general government of the country. He had done his duty so far as any sympathetic British Minister could do his duty. He trusted that whatever the right hon. Gentleman's disappointments might have been in the past, he might in this regard, at all events, not be disappointed. The right hon. Gentleman had approached the question with sympathy, courage, and hope, and he trusted that he would succeed in carrying the measure through. By so doing he would bring peace to many Irish homes, and gratitude to many Irish hearts, and wipe out much of the bitterness which had existed towards England amongst Irish peasants who had suffered from the Irish land system. In carrying this measure, the Chief Secretary would do much to palliate the existing state of affairs, and to make the path clear for the solution of the other great problems with which he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be associated before he resigned the office he now occupied.

*MR. BYLES (Salford, N.) said he believed that he was right in saying that every Member who had addressed the House in that debate was the representative of an Irish constituency. There were a great many representatives of English constituencies, and he thought that perhaps it would be well that some articulate support should be given from the benches on which the English Members sat. He had listened to a good deal of the debate, but his chief amusement was to witness the ingenious and skilful way in which the right hon. Member for South Dublin expressed his vehement opposition to this Bill, because he remembered a much shorter speech of the right hon. Gentleman in which he held out a prospect that he would not resist it.

MR. WALTER LONG: No.

*MR. BYLES said the words which the right hon. Gentleman uttered had been quoted by a previous speaker; and he was bound to say that there was a remarkable contrast between the kindly and hospitable way in which the right hon. Gentleman had entertained the idea of restoring the evicted tenants in Ireland and the speech which he had delivered that night. The right hon. Gentleman had said that all people were more or less agreed, chiefly more, that this question ought now to be settled even if it were necessary to resort to compulsion, to which, for his part, he would offer no objection.

MR. WALTER LONG: Oh, no; I said nothing of the kind.

*MR. BYLES said he had not the words by him, but at any rate the method of compulsion was mentioned by him, and was not deprecated. However, he must acknowledge himself mistaken, and wait until the words were produced against him. He was astonished that the Tory Party should be in opposition to this Bill, for he had hoped that the question had really got to a point when all Parties were more or less agreed that the time had come for a settlement. The evicted tenants question was an old story. But this Parliament was a new Parliament, and there were a great many of his colleagues on those benches who perhaps were not familiar with the earlier debates on this very difficult question, which had upset the relations of England and Ireland for many years. Hon. Members were never tired of reminding them they had not promised Home Rule during this Parliament, and that they had subordinated that question on the election platform. He was anxious, therefore, to put to the test whether his colleagues cherished the old fear which had been so assiduously nourished by their opponents, the fear that Home Rule meant separation, rebellion, priest rule, and so forth; and he could not help thinking that the Bill now before the House would do something to test that issue, and to discover what were their true feelings. He dared say that a good many Members of that House thought that when the Irish Council Bill was withdrawn they were done with the Irish question. It had not been long in reappearing; this was the third Parliamentary consecutive day on which the House had been engaged solely on Irish questions. The Irish question was the spectre which haunted every British feast, and which, until it was laid, would go on reappearing. The evicted tenants question was the sorest spot on the wounded body of that distressful country. It was the question which had engendered the sense of injustice amongst the Irish people; it was that which had strengthened anti-British feeling and thwarted every effort at legislation. Twenty years since, he remembered, the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for India stood at the Table full of hope after he had appointed the Fry Commission to solve the evicted tenants question. It was a long time since, and he was getting weary of waiting. He had visited all the Campaign estates, and he had investigated the merits of the disputes which had existed.

He had seen the poor tenants evicted from their homes, and he had wondered how they would get through the winter, dwelling in huts through which the rain fell, and where they were in sight of the farms from which they had been evicted, the homes of their fathers, the places which had been rendered fruitful by generations of labour. And these men, with their families, had passed through not one winter but twenty winters. What had become of all these poor people? How had their character stood the enforced idleness which had been their lot? The Plan of Campaign he might remind his Labour friends was in reality a strike just as much as any strike against employers, and their claim was just like the claims of other strikers. The hon. and learned Member for North Armagh had stated that nearly all the Plan of Campaign estates had been settled, and that only two now remained to be dealt with. What need, then, he asked, for compulsion? It was just because the thing was nearly settled that there was need for compulsion; and the hon. and learned Gentleman would find that when the Act of 1903 approached its termination the same method would have to be resorted to. He hoped that his Liberal and Labour colleagues, now that they had this Bill before them, would say that they would settle this question, which had been such a long pending trouble, and that they would make a complete job of it, putting it out of the way for ever. He believed that nothing they could do in that House would tend more to produce peace in Ireland than this measure. The hon. Member said it had been said so often that it had passed into a proverb that Ireland was the most crimeless country in the world; yet they had hon. Members opposite—"Little Irelanders" he called them—who represented constituencies in that country, and who were always ready to belittle their own countrymen. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Armagh laughed derisively at that.

MR. MOORE: I did not laugh.

*MR. BYLES said he would gladly withdraw what he had said, but he appealed to him and his colleagues, and to the whole House and every newspaper whether it was not true that the hon. and learned Gentleman and his colleagues day after day tried hard at Question time to bring discredit on their fellow countrymen? Where did they get their material from? From the agrarian troubles in the West of Ireland, where cattle was driven from the grazing farms in a manner which he could not help regarding as little more than practical joking. [Cries of "Oh, oh!"] Yes, the intention of the people who carried out these cattle-drives was to show they were able to defeat the police. He knew of a small estate in Roscommon of about 100 acres, and upon one occasion a sergeant and thirteen police were sent down there, and in spite of their watching, or pretending to watch, all day long the farm was cleared of its cattle, and the population around were delighted because they had defeated the police. It was quite true that Ireland was crimeless at the present moment. It was nonsense to say these events showed that Ireland was in a state of terror. The cattle were well treated; there was no cruelty; it was largely a practical joke at the expense of the police. Behind the cattle-driving there was also a grinding sense of injustice. "Eviction" had been a word of terror in Ireland for sixty years. Many men had died in the ditches, many had eaten their hearts out in the workhouse in consequence. Thousands of men from their evicted homes had fled the country with bitter resentment in their hearts. Those evictions had produced what hon. Members opposite had called disloyalty. But the restoration of those tenants would produce loyalty. How was the Irish Nationalist Party maintained? It was notorious that their funds were being constantly replenished from America and Australia, and that money came from Irishmen who had been driven from their own country. What was the motive which led those men to support the Irish Nationalist Party? Nothing but the bitter memories of past evictions. If the leaders of the Irish Party were heartless and sordid, which they were not, they would not desire this Bill to pass. If the hon. Members on the Opposition side were wise, which they were not, they would realise that they would be delaying Home Rule by passing this Bill. He was one of those who was very much disappointed when the Irish Council Bill disappeared, disappointed but not surprised, because it was born of timid counsel and it failed in consequence. A much bolder policy and a deeper trust of the Irish people were necessary for success. This Bill was a much more courageous one, and the first five lines of it ought to win the support of all who believed, as he did, that the land belonged to the people, that the cultivator ought to be considered before the lord of the soil, and that private interests must be subordinated to the interests of the public. The compulsory acquisition of land which hon. Members opposite found so much fault with would become in the near future an important precedent for England and Scotland. He hoped that this Bill would bring to those who had fought so hard and suffered so long and patiently, blessing and prosperity. He was glad that this, after all, was not going to be for Ireland a barren session. If he might repeat a phrase that he had used before he would say that Ireland was the Cinderella of the Empire. They had given self-government to the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, states with which they were not long ago at war, and yet self-government was denied to Ireland. They founded new Universities in the provincial towns of England, Scotland, and Wales, and even in Khartoum, but they left Irish students hungering and thirsting for the higher learning. To-morrow the House was was going to consider the sugar tax——

VISCOUNT TURNOUR: Hear, hear!

*MR. BYLES said he was not surprised to hear that cheer, because the noble Lord was hoping that the Government would have to resign, and expecting that he would form part of the new administration.

VISCOUNT TURNOUR said he had not the faintest hope that the Government would be defeated in regard to the sugar tax. They had broken their pledges too often for that.

*MR. BYLES said that a great many people were complaining that the taxes on sugar and tea were pressing very hardly upon the poor. It should not be forgotten that if these taxes were scourges to the English poor they were scorpions to the Irish poor, who were fleeing by thousands across the Atlantic. Why should they not extend to England as well as to Ireland that blessed word "compulsion." He wished to express his approval of a Government which had the courage to consider the public interest before private interests, and to take land compulsorily from the individual and give it to the community. He heartily supported the Bill before the House because he believed it fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, who said—

> "They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit thereof; they shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat."

In the strongest language he could use he expressed approval of the action of the Government and heartily supported the Bill.

MR. JAMES CAMPBELL (Dublin University) congratulated the Government upon the assistance they had received from the hon. Member who had just spoken, and in whose opinion the outrages in Ireland could be viewed in the light of practical jokes. The hon. Member took the view expressed by a member of the Government in another place that cattle-driving was not a serious crime; he seemed almost to consider it an amusement of the Irish people. He congratulated the hon. Member on the assumption of the *role* of fairy godmother to the Irish Cinderella.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): Who plays the rat?

MR. JAMES CAMPBELL said if there were rats about he could see some of them. At least, hon. Members would give him credit when he said, whatever his failings, he had never either in his professional or public career "ratted."

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I did not refer to you, you know that well enough.

MR. JAMES CAMPBELL said he imagined that the hon. Member was referring to those who had ratted. But passing from personal matters, he for one was very glad indeed that part of the scheme of the Land

Conference involved the restoration of the evicted tenants. He was also exceedingly glad that the wishes of the Land Conference were carried out in this House by the Act for 1903. He believed it was in the interest of all classes in Ireland that the question of the evicted tenants, which was a constant source of trouble and annoyance in the districts where they were evicted, should be settled on fair and generous terms. He was pleased to find that in the Act of 1903 ample provisions were made for that purpose. Those provisions were accepted by hon. Members below the gangway and by hon. Members opposite, including the hon. Member for Salford, as a sufficient solution of the question. In the debate on 29th June, 1903, the hon. and learned Member for Waterford, speaking on the question of compulsion more particularly in regard to the evicted tenants, used the following remarkable words—

> "There was no intention to put into the Bill any provision by which pressure, direct or indirect, could be brought to bear on existing tenants. The number of these new tenants who were really *bona fide* agriculturists working their own farms as ordinary farmers were comparatively few; and if they desired to continue in their holdings he would not give his sanction to any attempt compulsorily to put them out."

He did not observe that that sentiment elicited any cheers from hon. Gentlemen below the gangway; at least if it did they were very faint. Of course, it was quite obvious to those who took part in the debates of 1903, and indeed it was almost certain, that in a few isolated cases there would be considerable difficulty in not compulsorily restoring to their holdings some of the evicted tenants, but notwithstanding that fact and notwithstanding everything that was said with regard to the Clanricarde and Lewis estates, notwithstanding that every factor was in the knowledge of hon. Members in 1903, yet the House by common consent and agreement ratified and passed the Bill of 1903 the essential element of which with regard to new tenants was that there should be no pressure or compulsion of any kind. What had happened to alter that state of facts? It was suggested that the necessity had arisen for going behind and beyond everything that was agreed by common consent in 1903, owing to the inability of the Estates Commissioners to come to terms with certain landlords on whose estates there were evicted tenants' farms. He asked the attention of hon. Members opposite to the facts because he believed that if they understood what the Bill proposed to do not one of them would give his support to it for a moment. He believed that outside the House if a proposal was made in a matter of business to English Members sitting opposite, on the lines contained in the Bill they would flout and denounce it as dishonest and immoral. Since 1903, out of seventeen Plan of Campaign estates the tenants had been restored to fifteen by voluntary agreement between themselves and the landlords. Let that fact be borne in mind when it was alleged that the landlords had sought to go behind the bargain of 1903. The Mathew Commission Report, presented in 1894, said the Plan of Campaign was started on 116 different estates and that there were only some seventeen left on which any trouble remained. With the exception of two estates, the seventeen had since been disposed of. A settlement had now been arrived at in 114 out of 116 estates by mutual consent, so that the pretence for the compulsory powers in this Bill, so far as the Plan of Campaign estates were concerned, was narrowed down to two. The entire machinery of compulsion was to be put in force against all the landlords in Ireland, because out of 116 estates there remained two as to which up to the present the Commissioners had failed to come to any agreement. He held no brief for Lord Clanricarde. He had never seen that gentleman. He had even had very grave doubts whether any such person existed; but be that as it might, he did know something about his estates, because of information contained in the Report of the Matthew Commission, of which he thought mention might have been made by hon. Gentlemen below the gangway when they were referring to the difficulties between Lord Clanricarde and his tenants. The beginning of the trouble on Lord Clanricarde's estates was a general strike of all tenants on his property under the Plan of Campaign—an illegal conspiracy, decided by the Judges to be criminal, and denounced by the heads of the Roman Catholic Church as irreligious and immoral. The tenants joined in the Plan of Campaign and formulated a demand against Lord Clanricarde for an all round reduction of 40 per cent. in their rents. Lord Clanricarde considered that a direct attack on his property, and he resisted it. He (Mr. Campbell) thought Lord Clanricarde was right, but, as he had said, he was not concerned to defend him. What about the other case—the Lewis estate? He ventured to suggest that nothing could be more misleading than the reference to that estate which was contained in the paragraph in the Estates Commissioners' Report, because any fair-minded man reading that paragraph would come to the conclusion that the owners of the Lewis estate had declined to have any dealings whatsoever with the Estates Commissioners. Absolutely the contrary was the truth. The only difference between the owners of the Lewis estate and the Commissioners was a question of amount. There would be absolutely no difficulty at all, assuming that the Estates Commissioners were prepared to give what the owners considered a reasonable price, and he thought the House would agree that that was a question on which there might be a difference of opinion. What he himself did not agree with was that that question—the question of price—was to be solved by one of the parties to the bargain writing a paragraph to say that it was impossible to come to terms. He did not think that was treating the bargain with fairness and candour, seeing that the difference which divided the parties was merely a matter of terms. Of course, there were other evicted tenants. Let there be no mistake on that point. When hon. Gentlemen representing Irish constituencies, and speaking for the Nationalists, intervened in the debate in 1903, they were speaking not merely for the evicted tenants on the Plan of Campaign estates, but for evicted tenants all over Ireland. In season and out of season in the course of that debate they announced their assent to the principle, as regarded each and all of these tenants, that the matter was to be settled by negotiation, and that there was to be no attempt at compulsion. With regard to the evicted tenants on estates other than Plan of Campaign estates there was not a vestige of a case made out in the Report for applying compulsion. There was nothing apparent in that Report which did not lead one to assume that it would be quite easy to arrange and to come to terms with the owners of those lands which were not on the two Plan of Campaign estates. What had been done? Already since 1903, out of 3,000 cases the Estates Commissioners had settled over 1,000. That was not bad work in four years, and it had been done without any compulsion whatsoever. They had not only settled all the Plan of Campaign estates except two, but they had also got rid of at least one third of the suitable evicted tenants. Let the House have regard for a moment to the extent of that running sore, as it had been called, and see how far the Government proposals were competent to deal with the trouble. It was very difficult to follow the arithmetic of the Estates Commissioners' Report, but he was bound to quote a few figures. In round numbers the total number of applications for reinstatement which the Estates Commissioners had received was 8,500. Of these they had examined only 6,400 and left 2,000 wholly unexamined. Of the 6,000 they had examined they had passed 3,000. Summed up in a sentence the result of their operations was: They had accepted 3,000; they had rejected 3,000; and they had not examined at all into 2,000. Did anyone who knew anything of the history of Ireland imagine for one moment that, if the Government were sincere in the suggestion that they intended to limit the application of this Bill to the 3,000, there would not be, the moment the ink was dry on the signature of His Majesty to this Bill as an Act of Parliament, a fresh agitation started on behalf of the 5,000 who were left out in the cold? The Vice-President of the Board of Agriculture had been more than usually unfair when he suggested that the hon. and learned Member for North Armagh had made the suggestion that these 2,000 tenants should be scheduled for some ulterior and improper purpose. Why was it the Opposition insisted, as they did, and as they would continue to do throughout the passage of the Bill, even up to the last hour, upon having these names scheduled? He would tell the House. What was it the Bill proposed? Was it to confer the right of reinstatement upon 2,000 or 3,000 tenants? Nothing of the kind. It gave power to the Estates Commissioners to confer the benefits of the Bill on any one or all of the 8,500 tenants whom they considered fit to be restored. Let there be no mistake about that, and let not the House pass the Bill thinking that it only dealt with 3,000 tenants and might only involve £2,000,000. As the Bill stood it might involve 8,550 tenants, and there was no limit. Under its terms it was to apply to any person who had already applied for reinstatement to the Estates Commissioners, and that body might consider any of the applicants fit and proper persons to be restored. That was a vital part of the Bill. Speaking for himself, if a reasonable scheme had been brought in which would have settled this question once and for all, even although it involved compulsion, if it reasonably protected the landlord in his property he would have supported it, but so far from providing for finality under this Bill, the Estates Commissioners had power to deal with the number of tenants he had mentioned. But that was not the worst of it. It was said that the Government intended to restore 3,000 tenants, but on what principle they had resolved to exclude the other 5,000 odd was not stated. Surely these 5,550 tenants had a right to know why their claims were rejected. If Parliament passed a Bill for the relief of the evicted tenants, surely it was a common law right that those who were evicted tenants should know why they were not selected to receive the benefit and had a right to challenge the *ex parte* decision of the Commissioners. This Bill, moreover, would make an inroad upon the funds which Parliament had devoted to ordinary land purchase, and there the taxpayer was affected, and the Estates Commissioners had unlimited power to restore all these tenants while nobody knew who the tenants selected were. Anyone who voted for this Bill in the belief or delusion that it would close this sad chapter in Irish agrarian agitation would be making a great mistake. The hon. Member who last spoke from the Treasury Bench did so in conflict with the views he had uttered before, and the explanation of his attitude was not difficult for anyone to understand. Speaking from the front bench opposite he said the application of the Bill would be very limited, and that it would only be necessary in a very few cases to put these compulsory powers into force. That was a plea which hon. Members who were experienced in Irish legislation were accustomed to hear. Mr. Gladstone, in 1881, declared that his Act would only be put in force here and there as the estates were usually so well managed and the relations between landlord and tenant were generally so harmonious. They now knew what truth there was in that prophesy. They knew what happened once force was given to this policy of confiscation and dishonesty in Ireland. It was rather too late in the day, therefore, to advance such an argument in the House of Commons. Had this measure proposed to deal with the estate of Lord Clanricarde or any other landlord who had been offered reasonable terms by the Estates Commissioners and had refused them, the case would have been different; but it proposed that a man's land should be taken compulsorily without the necessity of any preliminary offer or negotiations. The Commissioners could take any plot of land they liked at their own price. In the whole course of British legislation there could not be found a parallel for what was proposed by this Bill. In all previous statutes where power was given to the War Office or other public departments, local authorities or railway companies, to acquire land compulsorily, not only was there an arbitration as to compensation before a sheriff or an arbitrator and a jury, but there was power to appeal on a case stated to the High Court. He challenged the right hon. Gentleman to find any provision in a statute similar to this where there was no power to challenge the value the Estates Commissioners put upon their own bargain. It was really like a provision out of a Gilbert and Sullivan opera. The hon. Gentleman said he was not far wrong. He thought it was quite possible that right hon. Gentlemen opposite who had brought in these Bills had only received them from somebody else and had not taken the trouble to read them. Supposing under Section 6 the Estates Commissioners secured a holding which the landlord thought was part of his demesne, where was the appeal? If the hon. and learned Gentleman could point that out he would give way.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. CHERRY, Liverpool, Exchange): If the right hon. Gentleman will refer to Clause 2, Sub-section (7), he will see it.

MR. JAMES CAMPBELL said it was almost an insult to the House to make such an interruption as that. All that that section did was to bring into operation Section 23 of the Act of 1903, But these were all questions of fact. The provisions for appeal read as if they came out of one of Gilbert and Sullivan's operas. There was not in the whole legislation of England or of the Empire any provision enabling the State to acquire lands of an individual against his will which did not give him some power of appeal or some redress against the public body who put compulsory powers in motion. It was the first time a Government had come forward to propose that not merely should a man's property be taken against his will, but that the price of it should be fixed by the very body who had power to take, and that if he was dissatisfied with their action the only appeal should be to the very body of whose injustice he complained. That was the merest travesty of justice. It was almost incredible, but it was the fact that the Bill did not contain a single clause for the remedy of a mistake or blunder on the part of the administrators of it. The Bill also proposed in the case of properties on which there were planters to give the Estates Commissioners compulsory powers to drive those men out of the holdings, and the extraordinary part was that while the Estates Commissioners complained that they could not get holdings for the evicted tenants, the Bill proposed that they should get holdings for the planters. The whole thing was a farce and a sham, and the Bill was really introduced to confer the tenure of judges upon the Estates Commissioners and so withdraw them from Parliamentary criticism. All this humbug in the Report was simply to make up a case for compulsion, but everyone in Ireland knew that there were hundreds and thousands of acres of land available for the evicted tenants if only a fair and decent price was given for them by the State. If the expenses connected with the administration of the Bill were added to the poorest purchase price, it would buy up three times the quantity of land required to restore all the evicted tenants. It was suggested in the Report that there was not land enough in Ireland to be had by free negotiation and sale on which to put the evicted tenants, but the Bill contained a scheme for turning out the planters and getting holdings for them. Why that roundabout process? Why not give the evicted tenants the holdings they were going to get for the planters? What was the necessity for compulsion it was difficult to understand. They were told that the Bill was to be limited in its application. The Vice-President had said it was only a question of terms; that the landlords were willing to reinstate the evicted tenants; that the planters were willing to go, and the evicted tenants were willing to be reinstated. It was difficult to understand why in a Bill of this kind a postscript should contain this extraordinary provision as to the *status* of the Estates Commissioners. By the Act of 1903 the Commissioners were given purely administrative duties to perform, and in the discharge of those duties they were under the control of the Government of the day. In that way it was secured that there should be direct control by Parliament over them, with direct criticism over their administration; and, speaking of those proposals, when they were first introduced to the House by the right hon. Member for Dover, the hon. and learned Member for Waterford congratulated the then Chief Secretary on the fact that the tribunal was to be non-judicial, that they would be servants of the Government and their conduct subject to criticism in Parliament. But now, in starting the Commissioners on a new career of confiscation and plunder—[laughter]—he was not surprised that it should cause amusement, but he should have thought that the most insatiable would feel their gorge rise at a proposal of this kind—now, by an inconsequential postscript, the Commissioners were to have the tenure of judges, and that he believed was the sole purpose and origin of the Bill. Would the Chief Secretary deny that the Bill was almost a draft from the hands of the Estates Commissioners?

MR. BIRRELL: I do not think I heard a more inaccurate statement, even in this House.

MR. JAMES CAMPBELL accepted that statement, for there was no better judge of an inaccurate statement than the right hon. Gentleman. But perhaps he would tell the House how much of the Bill was inspired by a majority of the Estate Commissioners. But whether the right hon. Gentleman cared or not to vouchsafe information to the House, the absence of any provision in the Bill for an appeal against their decision was the direct wish and view of the majority of those gentlemen. His chief objection to the Bill, let him say in conclusion, was that it would not settle the question. He would willingly and gladly have co-operated with the right hon. Gentleman, even to the extent of compulsion in the case of those landlords who had had an opportunity of selling on reasonable terms and had refused. But the extraordinary thing about this Bill was that it did not profess merely to give compulsory powers over landlords who were invoking the assistance of the State to get rid of their property but that the Estates Commissioners would be enabled, with the grossest injustice, to swoop down on landlords who did not wish to sell their property and to put back on their estates among respectable tenants men who were the ringleaders of disorder and disturbance there. That was a gross injustice. If the Bill had been limited to landlords who had invoked the assistance of the Act of 1903, and were asking the State for sums of money, or a State bonus, he could have understood its being said—"You must accept our terms as to the evicted tenants"; but the gross injustice of the Bill was that it enabled the Estates Commissioners to go to any corner of Ireland and pick out any estate from which they found that tenants had been evicted—although the remainder of the tenants had stuck to their farms and refused to join illegal combinations—and put back the very men who had been the cause of all the trouble, worry, and annoyance. It was all very well to talk about the "wounded soldiers of the war"—and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary would have to look to his laurels, for the Vice-President of the Board of Agriculture was going to run him close in the matter of poetry and pathos—but this talk of the wounded soldiers and the desolate roof tree and the fireless hearth was but one side of the picture. Did the right hon. Gentleman know, or would he ever learn, that to the Irish question there were two sides? They had heard one side of the picture described; let him tell the right hon. Gentleman of the other. There were hundreds of delicate women and children who had been reduced to poverty and starvation because they were annuitants dependent on property left on the assumption that rents would continue to be paid. For them the right hon. Gentleman seemed to have no sympathy. His pathos and his poetry was expended on men who with their eyes open joined in an illegal and immoral conspiracy. For them the whole machinery of land purchase was to be delayed. Did the House realise what this meant to those paying interest on their agreements to purchase? Honest farmers throughout the length and breadth of Ireland were to be penalised in order that a question might be settled in a few months which would be settled without difficulty in a few years in the ordinary course. He could not think why the Government at this stage of the session should go out of its way to bring forward a measure of this kind, every line of which was saturated with confiscation and would teach the Irish tenants that honesty, after all, was not the best policy. The only conceivable explanation was that the Government had yielded to threats and granted to fear what they would not have granted as a matter of conscience and right. The House had listened to the speech of the hon. Member for West Belfast, in which he informed the Chief Secretary in language with which he was pretty familiar, that if the Government faltered in regard to this Bill or accepted Amendments to alter its spirit or allowed it to be altered elsewhere, Ireland would want to know the reason why, and a match would be set to a flame in Ireland which would teach right hon. Gentlemen opposite that——

MR. DEVLIN said the right hon. Gentleman was absolutely misrepresenting what he had said.

MR. JAMES CAMPBELL said he was not quoting the hon. Member's exact words, but the substance and spirit of them, and if he denied them of course he would withdraw his statement. It was quite plain that hon. Members below the gangway were putting in force the lesson that to get anything out of the present Government it was only necessary to bully them. A strong dose of predatory legislation was necessary to bring back the wandering sheep to the fold, and this Bill supplied it. If English members could swallow this, there was no possible measure of confiscation or dishonesty which they might not swallow.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) said he had listened to the speech of the right hon. and learned Member for Dublin University with the deepest regret. It seemed to him an echo of the speeches that used to be heard fifteen or twenty years ago, the speech of a man quite oblivious of the fact that the Land Act of 1903 had been brought into that House as the result of an agreement between landlords and tenants, designed to bring the land war to an end. It would be easy to reply in the same spirit, but he took too serious a view of the matter to make a controversial speech. His mind went back to the year 1880, when, with a view to bringing conciliation into the land question, Mr. Forster introduced the Compensation for Disturbance Bill. He remembered the fate of that Bill and the consequence. He trusted that an unwise dealing with the present Bill, either in that House or the other, would not have consequences at all comparable with those which followed on that occasion. The restoration of the evicted tenants was a condition precedent of the Land Conference and the passage of the Land Act of 1903. He had been challenged with reference to declarations made during the discussion of the Land Act of 1903 in regard to compulsion. For the purpose of making that experiment, persons who believed compulsory powers would in the end be necessary consented to put that question on one side. The voluntary scheme had been tried and had broken down, so far as the western problem and the evicted tenants' question were concerned, and it was now necessary to have recourse to compulsion. It seemed to him ridiculous to say that compulsory powers were necessary to be applied in the case of landlords, and that no stricter rule should be applied to the new tenants who occupied these farms. So far as he was concerned he agreed in 1903 that the experiment of the voluntary system should be tried. It had been tried, and it had failed, and he said now that the Government were bound to introduce this element of compulsion. The right hon. and learned Member who had just sat down seemed to wish to make the House believe that there was no need for compulsion because there were only two estates—the Clanricarde and the Lewis estates—where evicted tenants could not be settled. That was an entire misrepresentation of the facts. But it it were true, surely no Government responsible for the peace of Ireland could allow even the owners of those two estates to defy Parliament, and to destroy the great policy which had been adopted by Parliament in 1903. He utterly denied that those were the only cases. He would read the Report of the Commissioners on this point. When the majority of the Commissioners were denounced from the Conservative benches, he would remind the House that the Report was signed by the three Commissioners. The Report was signed by the Commissioner who had the confidence of hon. Gentlemen above the gangway just as it was signed by the other two who had not their confidence. This was what they said with reference to the providing of holdings for these tenants—

"Now, in 1,259 of the 1,609 cases in which the applicants are considered suitable to be provided with holdings, their former holdings are in the possession of other tenants, and in 350 cases they are in the possession of owners all of whom at first refused to allow inspection. In sixty of these 350 cases, the owners, on being again approached by the Commissioners, have consented to an inspection being made, while as regards the remaining 290 the owners state that in sixty of them the holdings are now comprised in their demesnes, or are being worked by them as home farms. In ten the owners will not consent to reinstatement of the evicted tenants until the arrears of rent due at the date of eviction have been paid. In seventy-five the owners are not prepared to sell their estates. In thirty-two the owners will not sell the lands in their own hands apart from the rest of their estates. In forty-six the owners refuse to reinstate the evicted tenants, as they consider them undesirable tenants, and in sixty-seven cases they have assigned no reason for their refusal to permit an inspection being made of the evicted holdings. Where owners refused at first to consent to allow evicted holdings in their occupation to be inspected, on the ground that they were not prepared to sell the holdings apart from the rest of their estates owing to expense of proving title as regards these individual holdings, which expense would be as great as that of proving title to the entire estate, the Commissioners informed the owners that if the evicted tenants were at once reinstated and purchase agreements entered into at prices estimated by the Commissioners, they would collect from the reinstated tenants interest in lieu of rent, and pay it over as collected to the owners free of charge until such time as the entire estate was being sold. It will be seen from the foregoing statement that there is a very large number of cases

> which the Commissioners have inquired into, and in which, although they have not been able to effect the restoration of the applicants to their former holdings, or to provide them with new holdings, they are of opinion that the applicants should be supplied with holdings."

Therefore, they had the declaration, not of two Commissioners, but of all three Commissioners, that there were a large number of cases which, owing to the action of the landlords, it was impossible to deal with by the restoration of these men, although all the Commissioners were of opinion that they ought to be restored. In the face of that, was it not an absurdity for anyone to imagine that compulsion was not required, and that it was only necessary in the case of Lord Clanricarde? The fact was that in 1,259 cases the operations of the Commissioners had come to a standstill and could never proceed unless compulsory powers were given. He had only dealt so far with the action of the landlords in refusing to facilitate the restoration of these tenants, but apart from these landlords altogether the Commissioners were endeavouring elsewhere to get untenated land in order to provide new holdings for those tenants who could not be restored to their old holdings, and their operations were absolutely blocked. Here was what they said in their Report—

> "Of these 1,752 persons so approached by the Commissioners, 579 have failed to reply, 265 have refused to sell, 156 have stated that they are themselves about to institute proceedings for sale, 372 have replied that the lands are demesne lands or are worked by themselves as home farms, and in the case of 120 correspondence is still pending. Two hundred and sixty have intimated their willingness to sell, but of these only 147 have up to the present furnished particulars of the lands they are willing to sell. In forty-one of these 147 cases the estimated prices have been notified to the owners, who have in ten cases, comprising an area of 4,846 acres, replied that they will sell at the estimated prices, and formal proceedings for sale have been, or are about to be, instituted. In nine cases they have refused the estimated prices, and in the remaining twenty-two the Commissioners are awaiting replies from the owners."

The right hon. and learned Member for Dublin University in the concluding portion of his speech quoted some words which he himself delivered in 1903, and in which he emphasised the necessity of preserving the right of Parliament to criticise the action of the Commissioners. He was still of that opinion, and if the clause in the Bill dealing with the tenure of the Commissioners meant that their conduct was to be withdrawn from discussion and criticism in that House, he would not approve of it. But what was the fact? There were three Commissioners. One of them was friendly to hon. Members above the gangway and he had got a permanent tenure; his salary was on the Consolidated Fund. It was true that there was a charge on the Estimates for a portion of his salary, which enabled them to discuss his conduct in the House. The Chief Secretary would correct him if he was wrong, but he presumed that it was intended—in fact, he said so the other day when introducing this Bill—that if Clause 12 was passed, a charge of some sort would be put on the Estimates in the case of Mr. Bailey and Mr. Finucane, as in the case of Mr. Wrench, so that the House might be able to discuss their conduct on the Estimates. What was the injustice of putting the two gentlemen the right hon. and learned Member for Dublin University did not approve of in the same position as to tenure as the one he did approve of? Was it justice on his part to claim for Mr. Wrench, the one Commissioner who had his confidence, his own man as it were, a more secure tenure than he was willing to give to the two Commissioners who were supposed to be more friendly to the tenants? It seemed to him after that debate, and after hearing the threats held out to the two Commissioners, that it was only right they should have that security of tenure, because he supposed that if the hon. and learned Gentleman had the courage of his convictions, he would if he came into office to-morrow dismiss these two Commissioners.

MR. MOORE: I should certainly want an inquiry.

MR. JOHN REDMOND said that these Commissioners were exercising the most grave and responsible functions. Was it to be supposed, human nature being what it was, that, no matter how honourable or how courageous these men might be, they were to be impervious to threats of this kind? The interruption of the hon. and learned Member and the threats he and his friends had made that night were conclusive arguments in favour of putting these men on the same terms of tenure as the one who had the honour and glory of possessing the confidence of the hon. and learned Gentleman. He would say one word to the Chief Secretary. He desired to say that the right hon. Gentleman had in the spirit and in the letter fulfilled in this Bill the promise he made earlier in the session to Ireland and the evicted tenants. The Bill was a thorough fulfilment of his promise and was a courageous Bill. He only wished that the right hon. Gentleman in his other legislative efforts had had as free a hand as he had evidently had in this case. They on those benches believed that the right hon. Gentleman was a sincere friend of Ireland. They thanked him for this Bill. He was convinced that when the right hon. Gentleman had piloted the Bill through the House, as he was sure he would do, and when, unless most extraordinary counsels of folly prevailed in another place, he had carried it into law, he would have shown to the Irish people that he was sincere in his friendship to them, he would have done a great thing for the peace of Ireland and for the future of that country, and many thousands of Irish people would live to thank him for his courage and his honesty.

MR. BIRRELL said he was not surprised that the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down should have criticised with some severity the tone and temper of the right hon. Gentleman who preceded him in the debate, but he confessed he should not be a bit surprised, so oddly was human nature compounded, if the right hon. Gentleman were congratulating himself upon having delivered an eirenicon, a message of peace to Ireland, an olive branch despatched through a catapult. There were parts of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman that seemed to him to breathe almost a spirit of love and affection towards the Bill and even towards the evicted tenants. The right hon. Gentleman in one part of his speech held up the evicted tenants to scorn and infamy, and described them as worthless characters, and he (Mr. Birrell) knew not what else; but in other parts of his speech the right hon. Gentleman said it was right even to apply the principle of compulsion to certain landlords simply for the purpose of restoring these persons to the land from which they had once been evicted. Therefore, he, being in a peaceful frame of mind after listening to the debate for eight hours, was disposed to dwell on that portion of the speech to which he had last referred rather than on the more fiery and pugnacious portion. Until the right hon. Gentleman spoke there was in all the speeches he had heard, except one, a full recognition of the fact that having regard to the language of the Act of 1903, to the definitions therein contained of what an evicted tenant was, to the promises made even before that time, and to the assurances given on so many platforms by people of all Parties in Ireland that in this matter they were quite willing to let bygones be bygones—and he thought the debate had only emphasised what had previously been declared by all Parties—the time had come to accomplish this work as speedily as possible. Therefore he was not going back on the Act of 1903. He was not going back on the sub-section in Clause 2 which allowed the vast benefits of the Land Purchase scheme established by that Act to avail for the benefit of people who within twenty-five years before the passing of the Act were dispossesssed of their holdings. There was nothing in that sub-section about the Plan of Campaign. There was a general indication of a desire which only gave fulfilment to the agreement already arrived at at the Land Conference, that the evicted tenants were to come within the benefit of the voluntary proposals of that Act. Here they were in the year of grace, 1907, and he, at all events, after these evicted tenants had been out in the cold for over twenty-eight years, living in insanitary huts by the side of their old holdings, could not see, without attempting to vindicate their character or to say whether they were right or wrong, but simply recognising their miseries and the social danger to Ireland, how anyone could say that it was not time to consider how the job could be done. It had been a long time to wait in a ditch, and he could not accept the philosophic view that in a few more years the restoration would be accomplished at the present rate of progress. They must accomplish this job quickly. Four, five, six, seven, eight, or nine years was too long a wait for them to contemplate. He was glad that the hon. and learned Member for Waterford had called attention to the fact that the Report of the Estates Commissioners was unanimous. It was Mr. Wrench's Report as much as it was the Report of the other Commissioners. They must apply this principle of compulsion to get the land they required; nobody could read the Report of the Commissioners and doubt it. It was all very well to say that they had got enough untenanted land for their purpose and it was not necessary to acquire any more. The Commissioners were quite right in saying that they were not prepared to give up all the untenanted land they had for the benefit of these tenants. They had other interests to consider, other trusts to regard, other duties to discharge with regard to the tenants in possession of uneconomic holdings and wanting land to improve them. The Commissioners had to attend to all these businesses *pari passu* as well as they could, but they must not overlook the interests of one set of tenants in the interests of another. The task the Bill sought to discharge was to acquire quickly an amount of land estimated at 80,000 acres, to reinstate evicted tenants, either in their own holdings or in other holdings, upon which they might hope to live and thrive, not as tenants, but as purchasers under the beneficent operation of the Act of 1903. That being the task, the first thing they had to do was to find out how many evicted tenants there were. The right hon. Gentleman said he did not hold a brief for Lord Clanricarde, but he held a good brief for the bogus evicted tenants, for he suggested that the probabilities were that of the 8,000 odd people who said they were evicted tenants, a great many more really were than had been found so to be by the Commissioners. All he could say was that the Government did not tell the Commissioners they were to cut the number down to 2,000, but gave them a staff to whom they might say, "Find out as best you can the circumstances of these claimants. We know that many of them will prove to be no more evicted tenants than distressed astronomers. We three will adjudicate." Every case had been properly investigated by an inspector, and reported on to the three Commissioners' one spoken of as a tenants' man, one as the landlords' man, and one, Mr. Finucane, an Anglo-Indian, who, therefore, represented nobody and nothing. These three persons, whom the late Government selected and appointed, had been doing nothing since 1903 but garner information as to the circumstances of land tenure in Ireland. If the Government could have found three other persons more competent and less likely to excite the wrath of hon. Gentlemen opposite they would have done so. But they could not. These Commissioners had sifted the facts and given their reasons for rejecting those whom they had rejected, the reason being in most cases that they were not evicted tenants within the meaning of the Act of 1903. Hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite wanted to rip up all these cases, and it was said that no one would be satisfied with the decision, and that the rejected would demand another trial. It was impossible to do business in such a spirit. The job of dealing with these 8,000 claims had been a difficult one, but it was almost complete. The result was that there were roughly found to be 2,000 of these evicted tenants. That was more than was at one time anticipated, but everything was more than it was at one time anticipated. People entered into a war saying that it would cost £10,000,000 and it cost actually £250,000,000. Formerly attention was directed to the Plan of Campaign tenants only, but by the Act of 1903 the definition had been enlarged. It was not surprising that the 1,000 who had been talked of should have proved to be 2,000 in fact. All the claims had been investigated, and those had been excluded which it would have been ridiculous to admit. For the first time it was known who the evicted tenants really were. The hon. Gentleman had tried to make out that there would be great dissatisfaction. He dared say there would. Every unsuccessful litigant left the Court dissatisfied, sometimes with the Judge, and sometimes with his own counsel. They had found out who the evicted tenants were, and what kind of character they had, and whether they were likely to be benefited by purchase of their holdings. They had been told that the tribunal was shockingly insufficient. Heaven knew, everybody knew who had to do with Ireland, that it was difficult indeed to find three men, or thirty men, or one man who enjoyed the confidence of everybody in connection with the value of land. He therefore, could repeat only what he had said—they found these three gentlemen, appointed by the right hon. Gentleman opposite. It was perfectly well to say in that House, in a manner which he did not care to characterise, that two of them were such disgraceful persons as to take their orders from the United Irish League. If such statements could be framed in that House, then Motions might at once be made for the removal of such persons from office. There had been no case made or set up in that House against any of these three gentlemen. His acquaintance with them was limited to the time when he came into office. He saw all three of them several times. They were three men of singularly different orders and habits, and he thought the three of them together made a very excellent Court, and he could not say from his experience of Irishmen, either in that House or outside it, that he could name three men in whom he should have more confidence in discharging such a very difficult duty as determining the value of land. No one could have a greater respect for a Judge than he had, but they did not get out of their difficulty by importing a Judge. He knew Irish Judges some of whom had not the confidence of the tenants. They would not get rid of differences of opinion and momentary irritation simply by calling in a man learned in the law. They were quite safe in a matter of this sort by leaving it to the judgment of these three men, and he could not see where he would have been able to get better. He did not believe, honestly, there was a man in that House who really believed that any single Irish landlord would be cheated by the operation of this Bill.

MR. JAMES CAMPBELL: While I object to the use of the word cheated, I believe, under this Bill, as it stands, injustice will be done to a great many Irish landlords.

MR. BIRRELL said that was what he meant. He did not believe that under the operations of this Bill any Irish landlord would receive a less sum than he ought to receive as the value of his land, and he was bound to confess that if he was defrauded of his rights, as a landlord, he would be the first of his class to have so suffered. In the matter of the value of his land bought by way of purchase, if any landlord was defrauded under this Bill, it would be for the first time. He could not believe and did not believe the country would believe, that these three persons were at all likely to enter upon a campaign that would result in the reducing of the price of the land which they took under the operations of the Bill. He did not speak with any antipathy to landlords. He did not want their land. He had no desire for it. When everybody else had gone back to the land, he and his children would remain in town. He therefore, spoke quite impartially in the matter. Did hon. Gentlemen opposite really believe that these three Land Commissioners appointed by a Conservative Government who were going about for the purpose of acquiring land for evicted tenants, were likely to cheat or defraud the landlords, or reduce the fair price of their land? The unanimous Report of the Commissioners showed that compulsion had become necessary in order to complete within a reasonable time the reinstatement too long delayed of these men. Compulsion was necessary, and this tribunal was a satisfactory one. Upon the legal point raised by the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, all he could say was that he was advised, and he could say as a lawyer that he also agreed, that there was nothing in the point whatsoever. He thought the right hon. and learned Gentleman was as wrong as an ex-Solicitor-General ever was, and he could not put it much higher than that. If it should prove, however, on reflection and consideration that there was anything in the point he had made about demesne lands, he did not think there would be any difficulty in setting it right. Therefore, if the right hon. Gentleman really wanted to settle this matter in the friendly vein that might be occasionally disclosed in a speech otherwise difficult to understand, he asked him not to allow himself to be affected by that point. If there was anything in it it could be got rid of, and if there was nothing in it it need not disturb him. With regard to the tenure of these three Commissioners, Mr. Wrench occupied the tenure which the late Government gave him, and he had £3,000 a year. Mr. Wrench was an exceedingly clever, successful, and wise man. He got £500 a year extra in order to be criticised by the House of Commons. He had £500 a year added to his salary in order that they might have the pleasure of criticising him. All he could say was he would have been very foolish if he had not jumped at the offer. Criticism had not hurt him. The £500 he had no doubt had done him good. The other two Commissioners were on the same tenure as he, and the salaries which they received were on the Estimates, and, therefore, all three of them could be criticised; Mr. Wrench could be criticised because of his extra £500, and the other two Commissioners could be criticised because of their salaries of £2,000 a year. That being so, the House would have complete jurisdiction, as he thought it ought to have, of an administrative and chastening character, over these three gentlemen. He thought that when they were imposing on them new duties of a responsible kind, and which he had no doubt they would discharge in a judicial spirit, it was a most desirable thing that the two of them should be placed in a better position as regarded tenure of office than they were in at present. In conclusion, he would observe that he knew well, and he had it always driven home to him, that the Chief Secretary for Ireland occupied a difficult position. He was not a representative man; he did not represent hon. Gentlemen below the gangway opposite. [NATIONALIST cries of "Yes, you do."] No, he did not represent hon. Gentlemen below the gangway; he certainly did not represent hon. Gentlemen opposite; but he did represent something which he valued far more than the good-will of hon. Gentlemen opposite, and that was the permanent good-will of the British people towards Ireland, that permanent good-will which had not always had justice done to it, and he admitted that language was sometimes used with regard to it which it was rather difficult for Englishmen to bear; but he repeated that he was glad to know that he did represent the permanent good-will of the British people—the Scottish, the English, and the Welsh taxpayers—to the Irish people,—their wllingness, shown again and again, to run pecuniary risks, to take upon themselves pecuniary burdens for the sake of doing some good to Ireland; and he believed they recognised that in this case of the evicted tenants there was need for doing good. It was in that spirit and that belief that this Bill was introduced, and it was because that spirit and that belief, he was certain, animated the House, that he looked forward with confidence to the division.

Question put.

The House divided: — Ayes, 315; Noes, 98. (Division List No. 271.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Alden, Percy
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Barry, Redmond J. (Tyrone, N.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Belloc, Hilaire Joseph Peter R.
Benn, Sir J. Williams (Devonp'rt
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S. Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Billson, Sir Alfred
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Boland, John
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Brunner, Rt Hn Sir J. T. (Cheshire
Bryce, J. Annan
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, W. J. D.
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cairns, Thomas
Cameron, Robert
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt. Hn. Richard Knigh
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Churchill, Rt. Hon. Winston S

Clancy, John Joseph
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Coats,Sir T. Glen (Renfrew,W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins,SirWm.J (S.Pancras,W.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett,CH(Sussex,E.Grinst’d)
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crooks, William
Crosfield, A. H.
Crossley, William J.
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Devlin, Joseph
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh,S.)
Dewar,SirJ.A.(Inverness-sh.)
Dickinson,W. H.(St.Pancras,N.
Donelan, Captain A.
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C.(Barrow-in-Furness
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne,MajorE.Martin(Walsall)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Elibank, Master of
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Essex, R. W.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Evans, Samuel T.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Farrell, James Patrick
Ferens, T. R.
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gilhooly, James
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone,Rt.Hn Herbert John
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, RtHn.SirW.Brampton
Gwynn, Stephen Lucius
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harwood, George
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazleton, Richard

Healy, Timothy Michael
Hedges, A. Paget
Hemmerde, Edward George
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson,J.M.(Aberdeen,W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Higham, John Sharp
Hodge, John
Hogan, Michael
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Holland, Sir William Henry
Holt, Richard Durning
Horniman, Emslie John
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kilbride, Denis
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb,Edmund G.(Leominster)
Lardner, James Carrige Rushe
Law, Hugh A. (Donegal)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lea,Hugh Cecil(St. Pancras,E.)
Leese,SirJoseph F.(Accrington)
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever,A.Levy (Essex,Harwich)
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeigh,Charles (Donegal,E.)
M‘Crae, George
M‘Hugh, Patrick A.
M‘Kean, John
M‘Kenna, Rt.Hon. Reginald
M‘Killop, W.
M‘Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M‘Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield,H.Rendall(Lincoln)
Marks,G.Croydon (Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Meagher, Michael
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alport
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)

Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murnaghan, George
Murray, James
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts., Bassetlaw)
Nicholson,CharlesN.(Doncaster
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nugent, Sir Walter Richard
O’Brien,Kendal(Tipperary,Mid
O’Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny
O’Connor, John (Kildare,N.)
O’Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O’Doherty, Philip
O’Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O’Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O’Grady, J.
O’Kelly,James(Roscommon,N.
O’Malley, William
O’Shaughnessy, P. J.
O’Shee, James John
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearson, Sir W. D. (Colchester)
Pearson,W.H.M. (Suffolk,Eye)
Perks, Robert William
Philipps,Col.Ivor (S’thampton
Philipps,J.Wynford (Pembroke
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pollard, Dr.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C.E.(Edinb’gh, Central)
Price,Robert John (Norfolk,E.)
Priestley,W.E.B. (Bradford,E.)
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro’
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Redmond, William (Clare)
Richards,T.F.(Wolverhampton
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Robertson,SirG.Scott(Bradford
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T.W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel,HerbertL. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Scott, A.H.(Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hn. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David

Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smyth,Thomas E. (Leitrim, S.)
Snowden,P.
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanley,Hn. A.Lyulph (Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sutherland, J. E.
Tennant,SirEdward (Salisbury
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomasson, Franklin
Thompson,J.W.H.(Somerset,E.
Ure, Alexander
Vivian, Henry
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward,W.Dudley (Southampton
Wardle, George J.
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason,RtHn.E (Clackmannan)
Wason, JohnCathcart (Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Whitbread, Howard
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York., E.R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams,Llewelyn(Carmarthen
Williamson, A.
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Ashley, W. W.
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt.Hon.SirH.
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour,RtHn.A.J.(CityLond.)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Baring,Capt.Hn.G(Winchester)
Barrie,H. T. (Londonderry, N.)
Beach, Hn. Michael HughHicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bowles, G. Stewart
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. H. M.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw, H.
Cavendish,Rt.Hon.VictorC.W.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone E.)
Chamberlain,RtHn.J.A.(Worc.
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Coates,E.Feetham(Lewisham)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig,CharlesCurtis(Antrim,S.)
Craik, Sir Henry
Dixon-Hartland,SirFredDixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Du Cros, Harvey
Faber, George Denison (York)
Faber,Capt, W. V. (Hants, W.)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fell, Arthur
Fletcher, J. S.
Gordon, J.
Gretton, John
Hardy,Laurence(Kent,Ashford
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Helmsley, Viscount
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hills, J. W.
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway,Rt.Hon.SirJohnH.
Kenyon-Slaney,Rt.Hon.Col.W.
Keswick, William
Kimber, Sir Henry
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Liddell, Henry
Lockwood,Rt.Hn.Lt.-Col.A.R.
Long,Col.CharlesW.(Evesham)
Long,Rt.Hn.Walter (DublinS.,
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Magnus, Sir Philip
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Meysey-Thompson, E. C.
Middlemore,JohnThrogmorton
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Moore, William
Morpeth, Viscount
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Nicholson, Wm.G.(Petersfield)
Nield, Herbert
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Pease,HerbertPike(Darlington)
Percy, Earl
Rawlinson,JohnFrederickPeel
Roberts,S.(Sheffield,Ecclesall)
Ronaldshay, Earl of
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sheffield,SirBerkeleyGeorgeD.
Smith,AbelH.(Hertford,East)
Smith,F.E.(Liverpool,Walton)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Starkey, John R.
Staveley-Hill, Henry (Staff'sh.)
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thomson,W.Mitchell-(Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.
Turnour, Viscount
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Warde, Col. C. E. (Kent, Mid)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Forster.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Bill committed to a Committee of the Whole House for Monday next.—(*Mr. Birrell.*)

And, it being after half-past Eleven of the Clock on Monday evening, Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Adjourned at one minute after Twelve o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 9th July, 1907.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [H.L.].—Commons Amendments considered, and agreed to.

Worthing Gas Bill.—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

London United Tramways Bill.—Reported, without Amendment.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill; Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill [H.L.]; Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill [H.L.].—Reported, with Amendments, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow.

Penrith Urban District Council Bill; King's Norton and Northfield Urban District Council Bill.—Reported, with Amendments.

City of London (Union of Parishes) Bill [H.L.].—Read 3^{a}; Amendments made; Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

Leeds Corporation Bill.—Read 3^{a}, with Amendments; a further Amendment made; Bill passed, and returned to the Commons.

Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Surrey, etc.) Bill [H.L.]; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]; Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]; Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 4) Bill [H.L.]; Fitzgerald's Divorce Bill [H.L.].—Returned from the Commons agreed to.

Heywood and Middleton Water Board Bill [H.L.].—Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments.

Brighouse Corporation Bill.—Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to.

Killery's Divorce Bill [H.L.].—Message from the Commons for copy of the Minutes of Evidence taken before this House, together with the proceedings, and the documents deposited in the case; ordered to be communicated, with a request that they may be returned.

Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2.) Bill [H.L.]—(Fleetwood Victoria Pier Order); Barry Railway Bill; Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway (General Powers) Bill; North Staffordshire Railway Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6.) Bill—(Dunstable Order).—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Viscount Falkland be proposed to the House as a Member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Southampton; read, and agreed to.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7.) Bill (No. 99); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill (No. 100).—Brought from the Commons and read 1^{a}; to be printed; and referred to the examiners.

Portobello and Musselburgh Tramways (Levenhall Extension) Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.].—Read 2^{a} (according to order), and (pursuant to the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899), deemed to have been reported from the Committee; and Bill to be read 3^{a} To-morrow.

Ladybank Sewerage, Drainage, and Water Provisional Order Bill; Clyde Navigation Order Confirmation Bill.—Read 3^{a} (according to order), and passed.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Code of regulations for public elementary schools in Wales including Monmouthshire, with Schedules, 1907.

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3852. Russia (Foreign trade of Russia, and trade of St. Petersburg).

No. 3853. China (Wuchow).

No. 3854. Japan (Tairen (Dalny)).

No. 3855. Uruguay (Trade and Finances).

COLONIES.

Papers relating to the Brussels Sugar Convention.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

NEW BILL.

REGISTRATION OF FIRMS BILL [H.L.].

A Bill for the registration of firms and persons carrying on business under trade names. Was presented by the Lord Brassey; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 98.)

SALMON AND FRESH WATER FISHERIES BILL [H.L.].

Reported from the Standing Committee, with further Amendments. The Report of the Amendments made in Committee of the whole House and by the Standing Committee to be received to-morrow; and Bill to be printed, as amended. (No. 101.)

THE YEOMANRY.

***THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE:** My Lords, I wish to ask the noble Earl the Under-Secretary of State for War a Question of which I have given him private notice. During the course of the discussion which took place yesterday he made to your Lordships two or three most important statements with regard to the duties of the County Associations and also with regard to the conditions of service of the Militia and the Yeomanry. I wish to ask him whether he could make it convenient to lay upon the Table a Memorandum summarising the information which he thus gave. Such a Memorandum would, I cannot help thinking, be extremely convenient to those who now have to rely upon the somewhat condensed reports which appear in the public Press.

***THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Earl of PORTSMOUTH):** My Lords, I shall be very glad to endeavour to comply with the noble Marquess's request and lay the Memorandum asked for on the Table. My noble friend has also given me private notice of another Question—namely, whether it is possible to meet the views urged by various Members of the House in regard to treating the Yeomanry in a more favourable way. Since I have received that appeal, and having regard to the very authoritative and influential representations made by Earl Roberts, Viscount Midleton, Lord Harris, and Lord Methuen, we have considered whether it would be possible to respond to it. I hope the statement which I am about to make will be received as a practical proof that the Government are anxious to treat the Yeomanry with every possible consideration; and I hope also that it will not be made the ground of urging further demands. In the case of the Yeomanry it has been decided to increase the emoluments of non-commissioned officers and men who will draw the new rate of pay. In addition to Army pay of 1s. 2d., camp allowance of 1s., and ration allowance of 6d., already announced, every non-commissioned officer or man present at training who is certified to be efficient in equitation will receive an equitation bounty of £1 as an addition to the new rate of pay. I might add that the Government propose to invite the Yeomanry Commanding Officers' Committee, General Mackinnon, Director of Auxiliary Forces, and General Haig, Director of Military Training on the General Staff, to meet under the presidency of my noble friend Lord Scarbrough to consider and report upon the future arrangements for the training and management of the Yeomanry. I hope this statement will be received in the spirit in which it is made.

ADVERTISEMENTS REGULATION BILL. [SECOND READING.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: My Lords, your Lordships will be glad to hear that it is not necessary for me to occupy many moments of your time in asking for the Second Reading of this Bill. The Bill is an old friend of your Lordships, having passed this House with practical unanimity two years ago. Its object is to enable local authorities to exercise a certain reasonable amount of control over the display of advertisement boards within their districts. Past experience has shown that, when there is no power of regulation, appeals to common sense and to good feeling are rather apt to fall upon deaf ears, because the competition in this matter is sometimes very keen, and everyone who wishes to advertise at all is anxious to get the most prominent place and to display his advertisement in the most prominent way. There have been some very flagrant cases, and although the wiser men in trade deplore this class of competition those who are less scrupulous out-bid them in the nature of the advertisements which are displayed. There have been, as I have said, some very flagrant cases, notably at Edinburgh and at Dover, and in both those cases and in others somewhat stringent provisions have had to be inserted in local Acts of Parliament. It is common ground between the promoters of this Bill and the Government Department concerned that the chance insertion of clauses in various local Acts is not a satisfactory way of dealing with this important matter, and the object of the Bill is to lay down certain general regulations. When the local authority have made their by-laws they will require confirmation by the central authority after due inquiry. This year the Bill has passed the other House of Parliament, and I am hopeful that the Government Departments concerned entirely approve of it. There will be one or two points which may require attention in Committee—in fact, I shall have myself to suggest to your Lordships one or two Amendments; but obviously it would be better to postpone the explanation of those points until we reach the Committee Stage, if your Lordships are good enough to give the Bill a Second Reading. I beg to move.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

EARL BEAUCHAMP: My Lords, I am sure the object of this Bill will commend itself to every Member of your Lordships' House, and I am instructed by His Majesty's Government to say that they will be very glad to do all they can to assist its passage into law.

On Question, Bill read 2ª (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

TERRITORIAL AND RESERVE FORCES BILL.

House again in Committee (according to Order.)

[The Earl of ONSLOW in the Chair.]

Clause 2 (resumed):

LORD METHUEN, on behalf of the Earl of Meath, moved to omit the following words from the sub-section relating to the establishing or assisting of cadet battalions and corps, and also rifle clubs:

> "Provided that no financial assistance shall be given by an association in respect of any person in a battalion, or corps in a school in receipt of a Parliamentary grant until such person has attained the age of sixteen."

He wished at the outset to make his position quite clear. He did not speak in any way as a General Officer holding a high command, but rather as a member of the Lads Drill Association and as commandant of that very valuable organisation, the Church Lads Brigade. He received with great satisfaction the announcement of the clause in the original Bill, but the alteration of the clause in the other House had totally upset the good that they had expected from it. Speaking on March 23rd the Secretary of State for War gave expression to these admirable sentiments—

> "They wanted the youth of the nation to undergo training, so that they would keep the reservoir always filled—namely, the national Army of 300,000. They wanted to work the cadet corps into a much more important position than they had been up to the present, and by so doing they would allay fear and give people a sense of security such as they had not hither to had."

Mr. Haldane continued—

> "Could anyone look upon a first rate cadet corps without feeling that every one in it was better and stronger morally and mentally? It helped him in life and in employment. It helped him to be a better citizen, not only for military but for civilian duties. From every point of view the cadet corps were things to be encouraged in the interests of the nation."

The reason for the *volte face* on the part of the Government he hardly liked to touch upon, because he wished as far as possible to avoid politics; but he supposed there had been a certain amount of pressure on the part of those people who seemed to recognise militarism in every proposal of this kind. He had been told that people did not like their boys to be brought up to kill their foes, nor did they wish to have an Army that was always seeking to fight everyone else. They had an Army to defend their country, and they taught these boys in the schools training not that they should learn to kill, but that they should learn how to defend. He remembered his French fencing-master saying, when he asked him whether good fencers were always fighting duels, "Not at all. The man who is a good fencer is the man whom everyone avoids." So was it with the lads at school who were trained. He desired to emphasise the importance of getting hold of the boys at twelve years, for it was much easier to get them to take an interest in drill and to instil in them patriotism at that age than it was at sixteen years; and for the life of him he could not see why they could not compel boys to improve their physique, their patriotism, and their sense of discipline just as much as they compelled them to learn arithmetic and so many other school subjects. He had instructions from the War Office in 1901 to help in the training of the boys in secondary schools, and four years later it was his duty to inspect about 180 secondary schools in his command. He believed that these secondary schools would help them to officer their Auxiliary Forces far more than would the large public schools, and that they would be an example to the elementary schools. There was another point to which he wished to call attention. The War Office only granted help to uniformed cadet corps; ununiformed cadet corps, who most required help, got nothing. The Grocers Company's school, which was now a London County Council school, had been spoken of by Major General Tulloch as a school which, either in handling arms or in moving on parade, were equal to a thoroughly well-trained Line battalion, and they had won the Frankfort shield twice. Yet those boys were not entitled to help because they were an ununiformed corps; whereas those schools the parents of whose scholars were rich enough to put their sons in uniform were able to draw the grant. He had always held that whatever the big public schools or secondary schools did would be an example to the elementary schools; and he would read short extracts from three letters of head-masters in Derby. Mr. John T. Slater, of the Derby St. James's Higher Grade School, wrote—

> "The advantages seem to me as great mentally as physically. Straight shooting is impossible without concentration of thought and an effort of will power, there must be proper correlation of hand, eye and mind."

Mr. William Lazenby, of the St. Andrew's Day School, wrote—

> "To my mind it is one of the best things, if not the best, we have ever done for our boys. Would that it had been done years ago."

Mr. H. W. Yates, of the Traffic Street Council School, wrote—

> "The primary object I had in view in taking up this subject was to secure an additional form of organised recreation for the boys, and I find that besides achieving that object, the lads are receiving an excellent training in control of the nerve, hand, and eye."

Dr. Warre had told him that the movement must come from within and not from without. That had proved perfectly true, and he could not exaggerate the help he had received from both masters and boys. He did not suppose that at any time there was more talk about the Colonies than at present, and he would like to refer their Lordships to what was being done in the way of giving military drill as part of the education of boys in the schools of Canada, Natal, and Australia. In Natal—

> "Under the Militia Act of 1903, boys under twelve years of age must receive the elements of military drill. At twelve they were allowed to carry arms. No compulsion, however, had ever been needed. The youth of Natal were all eager to qualify as marksmen."

In Australia—

> "They had attached and were attaching to their schools a cadet system by means of which the rudimentary drill given everywhere was supplemented by sufficient training to make those boys who were trained, better set up, more obedient, more prompt, more alert. That was an excellent discipline, and even in this comparatively small population they had 30,000 cadets to-day, and would probably have 40,000 next year, and 50,000 the year after."

In Canada—

> "Thirty-three years ago they introduced military drill as a regular part of the work of all the

boys in their schools. They believed in a nation prepared for arms, in a brotherhood in arms from the national standpoint, and they believed also that the most comprehensive and the most economical plan by which they could train the men of a nation to be prepared to do their duty for their country was to do it when they were school boys. Their boys took military drill when they reached the age of eleven just as regularly as they took arithmetic or grammar or any other subject, and they took it joyously."

When Prince Arthur of Connaught visited Canada last year he inspected fifty-four companies of well-drilled boys in a city of less than 300,000 inhabitants. The quotations he had read to their Lordships were from responsible Ministers of the three Colonies concerned. He had himself suffered through the youth of our country not being trained. He had men out in South Africa the only part of whose body which was in the right place when they were on horseback was their heart. They were indifferent horsemen, and as riflemen they were as great a danger to friend as to foe. He was not one of those who had ever preached militarism. He had never gone even so far as the National Defence League. He had devoted himself entirely to the training of the youth of the country, and he most earnestly appealed to their Lordships not to take any steps which would place obstacles in the way of the rising generation fitting themselves for the defence of their country when the time of danger arrived.

Amendment moved—

"In page 4, line 9, to leave out from the word 'clubs' to the end of paragraph (*f*)"—(*Lord Methuen.*)

*EARL ROBERTS expressed his gratitude to Lord Methuen for having brought forward this subject, and endorsed what his noble friend had said as to the response which masters and boys had made when appealed to. He regretted that any change in this particular matter had been made in the original draft of the Bill. It must, he thought, have been a great blow to the Secretary of State to have to alter his mind on that point, and it would be a very great loss to any Army maintained on a voluntary basis. What Lord Methuen had said as to the necessity of boys being drilled from twelve or thirteen years of age was absolutely true. It was a great blot on our educational system that boys were turned adrift and left to their own devices at the early age of thirteen or fourteen, just at the very time when they ought to be looked after and be under control. The boys in the Duke of York's School, the Royal Hibernian Military School, and the Gordon Boys' Home were kept until they were fifteen or sixteen, and those few extra years proved of the greatest benefit to them. It seemed to him that, in turning boys adrift at the age of thirteen or fourteen, Parliament was responsible for all the loafers and unemployed in our streets. These men had not been given the helping hand they ought to have been given, and it was because they were left to their own resources as boys and were consequently unable to look after themselves when they became men that our streets were full of unemployed. The percentage of our losses in the last campaign was infinitely greater than the losses during the campaign in Manchuria. The climate there was much more inclement than in South Africa, but our percentage of losses was double that of the Japanese or the Russians. That was a clear proof that our men did not grow up healthy and strong as they ought to, and the reason was that as boys they were not properly looked after. The present was a grand opportunity for doing something for cadet corps and for boys leaving school, and he hoped their Lordships would not let it go by. Other nations did not call the training of boys militarism. We were in such a position that our people had never had the danger of invasion brought home to them, and did not think it necessary to take the most ordinary precautions. They did not really know what war was, having had all their battles fought for them on foreign soil. But they might depend upon it that the time would come when the danger would be brought to their own homes. He would strongly urge their Lordships, while there was yet time, not to lose this opportunity, for the sake of a few thousand pounds, of helping the poorest boys, who so much required looking after, because people talked about militarism. Those who spoke of compulsory military training and conscription being identical did not know what they were talking about. He would read an extract from a pamphlet entitled "Social Democracy and the Armed Nation"—

> "It may be asked in what this system of universal compulsory military training differs from conscription. It differs in the most essential features. Under conscription, generally speaking, the service is not universal; it does not fall on all classes alike. A certain number of conscripts are drawn each year, and any well-to-do youth who may happen to be drawn can escape service by paying for a substitute. Moreover, the officers are almost entirely drawn from the 'superior' classes. With the armed nation no one, unless he were physically incapacitated, would be exempt from the compulsory training, and a man would not be an officer simply because he had wealthy or influential friends, but because he had qualified himself by special studies and training for his duties. Above all, there is this vital difference, that with the armed nation there would be compulsory military training, but no military service except in time of war, when all would be liable to be called on in proportion to their age, training, etc."

That was the difference between training and conscription, and he read the paragraph to their Lordships because he had heard it said by noble Lords that compulsory training meant conscription. It was absolutely different. He would only express his earnest hope that some consideration would be given to Lord Methuen's Amendment. It was, in his opinion, a most important one, and would provide the only means by which they could hope to diminish the number of the unemployed in our streets.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said it was quite impossible for His Majesty's Government to accept the Amendment. They did not oppose it because they were afraid of militarism, but because they considered that as the money to be spent under this clause was to come out of Army funds, and they had not got unlimited funds at their disposal, this was not a matter of primary importance. The noble and gallant Field-Marshal had spoken of the ages of thirteen to fifteen being dangerous periods of temptation to the youth of the country.

*EARL ROBERTS: I said from fourteen to sixteen.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said they were not dealing in this Bill with social questions. It was a Bill the primary object of which was to raise an Army, and the Government thought that expenditure under it should be restricted to matters which were of primary military importance. It was the opinion of many military men, in spite of what had been said that evening by two distinguished military Lords, that the Army Council would hardly be justified in expending Army funds on the training of boys under sixteen, and he felt that there was a great deal of force in the view that such money would be far better spent on more directly military purposes. He would like, in this connection, to refer to Sir Edward Ward's Committee, which inquired into the provision of officers and went very thoroughly into the military value of the training given in school cadet corps. That Committee recommended that if a boy had received a thorough training in his school corps he should be exempted from four of the twelve months training which he subsequently had to undergo before qualifying for the reserve of officers. He quoted that as showing that the Committee were not biased in the opposite direction, but were quite ready to appreciate the value of cadet corps. Yet this Committee went on to say that it was of no use to commence training boys at school under the age of fifteen. Moreover, if ever there was an Amendment which amounted to a breach of privilege, this Amendment certainly did.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: No, no.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said that the Resolution of the Commons of July, 1676, which had been accepted ever since, declared—

> "That all aids and supplies and aids to His Majesty in Parliament are the sole gift of the Commons, and all Bills for the granting of any such aid and supplies ought to begin with the Commons, and that it is the undoubted and sole right of the Commons to direct, limit, and and appoint in such Bill the ends, purposes, considerations, conditions, limitations and qualifications of such grants, which ought not to be changed or altered by the House of Lords.

The proposal to strike out this proviso seemed clearly a contravention of that Resolution.

SEVERAL NOBLE LORDS: No, no.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said it would change and alter the ends, purposes, considerations, conditions and limitations of the Parliamentary grant under Clause 3.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: It does not follow that it is a Parliamentary grant.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said that, in his opinion, the proposal to strike out this proviso seemed clearly a contravention of the Commons' Resolution. It was perfectly within their Lordships' power to divide, and he had no doubt if they did that the Amendment would be carried; but he could hardly conceive that the House of Commons could be expected to accept an Amendment of this kind, and he ventured to express the hope that their Lordships would be content with the discussion that had taken place.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said he did not rise to address their Lordships on the merits of the Amendment, but solely with reference to the point of order which had been raised by the noble Earl the Under-Secretary. He submitted that the noble Earl had read the effect of the proviso incorrectly. It did not say that assistance was to be given, but that the assistance was not to be given—a very important difference. If the proviso were struck out the association had annually to submit a budget to the Army Council for its approval. but it did not follow that the Army Council would necessarily agree to it. The second objection to the argument of the noble Lord was that it did not follow that this money which would be given would come out of the pockets of the taxpayers of the country. If there was any excess over the amount of money allowed by the Army Council, the money was to be found out of the pockets of private members of the association. There was thus no interference on the part of the House with a Parliamentary grant.

*THE EARL OF MOUNT-EDGCUMBE said he had listened with extreme interest and the keenest sympathy to the speeches of the noble and gallant Lord who had moved the Amendment and the noble and gallant Field-Marshal on the cross benches. He had anticipated, in his own mind, what would be the arguments adduced by the noble Earl the Under-Secretary in opposition to the Amendment, but he had not expected the argument of privilege. That argument had been fairly answered by the last speaker. When, however, the Under-Secretary said that this provision was not of primary importance to the measure, he reminded him of the extreme weight attached by Mr. Haldane to the encouraging of that patriotic spirit which would lead large numbers of young men to join the Territorial Army, for without the influence of that spirit this great measure was doomed to failure. The subject was, therefore, of very great importance, for, in the opinion of the Secretary for War, it was essential to the safety of the country, the maintenance of peace, and the avoidance of anything in the nature of compulsory service. At the same time, their Lordships saw an extraordinary anomaly such as he believed could hardly exist in the government of any country, but this. While the Secretary for War was appealing to this patriotic spirit to establish defensive forces, a Minister in the same Cabinet at the head of the Education Department was apologising for having ventured to encourage drill and shooting in certain elementary schools, and practically promising that they would not be insisted upon. Mr. Birrell said that, not because it was bad for the boys, or that it would interfere with their education, but because he had made up his mind that as long as he was at the head of the Education Department, he would never allow the Education Department to become an auxiliary of the Army. In his judgment, that was an extraordinary instance of a House divided against itself on a point vital to the safety of the country, and he was afraid the same condition of things prevailed at the present time.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: My Lords, I am very loth indeed to take any part in the debate on this Bill. The measure embodies a great plan which, I think, on the face of it, recommends itself largely to my mind at any rate, and to the mind of many civilians who are unacquainted with the technical details of Army affairs, but if the Amendment now before the Committee is pressed to a division, I shall certainly feel it my duty to vote for it. My conscience is clear in that respect, because I am not opposing the Government; I am endeavouring to restore the Government to its first intentions. I am voting for the Government against the Government itself, and therefore my hands are clean.

I confess that I listened with great curiosity to the arguments by which the Under-Secretary was disposed to set on one side the more convincing arguments of his chief. The noble Earl's arguments resolved themselves into two —first, that the Amendment was a breach of privilege; and, secondly, that the funds to be applied were military funds which ought not to be applied to a purpose which was not military. Now, I venture to think that there is no base for either of those contentions, I think that the privilege of the other House of Parliament in respect of finance should be jealously observed in this House. I remember the time when the Education Bill of the late Government was before us, and when, not a coach and six, or a coach and twelve, but three coaches and twelve were driven through that privilege. Your Lordships will remember the Amendment of the Bishop of Manchester about the maintenance of schools, and I confess that when I think of that transaction I am rather disposed to blush for the proceedings of this House.

But, on the other hand, we ought not to strain this question of privilege so as to fetter our discussions and to rule almost every topic of interest out of range. It is a case of the utmost pedantry to urge this question of privilege now, for, in the first place, you are not enlarging any expenditure, but simply cancelling from the clause a possible limitation on expenditure. The Bill, as it will go down to the Commons if this Amendment be carried—and I confess that looking at the somewhat sparsely tenanted benches opposite, I cannot doubt that it will be carried—will contain, so far as this clause is concerned, no financial injunction or restriction whatever. It is impossible, therefore, to believe that there is any question of privilege in this Amendment; while as to military funds, I think that my noble friend Lord Camperdown has shown, in his short but unanswerable speech, that the funds to be given by the Army Council will be largely diluted in the expectation of the Government by voluntary contributions. I left the House last night when it was engaged in an earnest desire to find out what the duties of the president of the local association would be, and I confess that I left the House because I saw very clearly what the duties of the president would be. One of his main duties will be to act as a competent subscriber to the funds of the association. I think it is perfectly clear from the announcements of the Government that the funds of the associations provided by the Government will be wholly inadequate for the purpose the Government have in view, and that, therefore, voluntary subscriptions must largely enter into the finance of the associations. That has a further bearing. My right hon. friend Mr. Haldane was extremely anxious, and rightly anxious, to enlist in support of his scheme the public spirit and patriotism of the country. To do that you must allow the public spirit and patriotism of the country to find the vent which it wants itself. You must not shut it up in the narrow groove laid down for it by the Act of Parliament or by the Military Council. You must give it free vent. You must do everything you can to stimulate that enthusiasm and patriotism. I am quite sure that anything in this Bill which cools or damps that enthusiasm and patriotism is a fatal blow struck at the county scheme.

Now, you say that these purposes are not military purposes. Since when have they ceased to be military purposes? How long will it take a boy at fifteen to reach the age of eighteen? I do not know whether the memory of the Government is so short that it has forgotten altogether what happened in the South African War. After the first line was exhausted you had to call on the nation for Volunteers. You got Volunteers. Lord Methuen has described in his singularly stirring speech how many of those Volunteers were absolutely untrained; that they could not ride and they could not shoot, but their hearts were in the right place. If you train boys in schools, three years hence you will have a reserve force capable in the case of war of coming to the assistance of the country, not as untrained, but as trained Volunteers. Is that so miserable a consideration that His Majesty's Government are compelled to overlook it in a great Territorial scheme?

I think it extremely possible that if your Lordships pass this Amendment the House of Commons will reinsert the original words; and in that case I should respectfully urge your Lordships not to insist on your Amendment. But in any case I hope you will divide, because you will then be enabled to present to the country a weight of opinion which I do not think even the House of Commons can equal, when we remember the Generals and the men of high military capacity who have addressed us to-night. You will present a weight of opinion to the country on behalf of this proposal which no Government in the long run can afford to disregard.

*THE EARL OF DUNDONALD reminded their Lordships that in Natal, which had been referred, to in addition to compulsory cadet training for three years, there was compulsory adult training for fifteen days in each year of Militia service—more training than was contemplated in the Territorial Army scheme. He maintained that, unless men who entered the Territorial Army received more training than was compulsory in this Bill, that Army would only be a mockery. The training of the soldier might be divided into two portions. The first portion, the purely mechanical, could well be learnt in boyhood before commencing the serious business of life, which might be said to begin at the age of sixteen. If the proviso at present in the clause remained part of the Bill the youth of the country would be prohibited from getting in their school-boy days that knowledge which was absolutely essential, not only to an efficient Territorial Army, but to that great reservoir from which they hoped to draw.

LORD NEWTON, referring to the aversion of the noble and gallant Lord to treating this matter in a political spirit, said that the history of the change in the Bill was political and political only. It was an open secret that the change was made in consequence of the vehement opposition of those Gentlemen who were credited as representing what were called the labouring classes. If military opinions were going to be quoted, he thought the House generally would agree that the opinions of the noble and gallant Lord who moved the Amendment and of the noble and gallant Earl Lord Roberts, outweighed the collective opinions of those who sat upon the Committee to which the noble Earl the Under-Secretary had alluded with so much respect. He really thought it advisable to draw the attention of the House to the extraordinary attitude adopted with regard to this particular question by the Labour leaders. Apparently in the view of those represeentatives the British male child when he was born was to be fed, clothed, and educated at the expense of the State; as he grew older he was to be amused and entertained by the State, employment at a subsequent stage was to be found for him, and in his later years he was to be pensioned. But if, in return for all this, any kind of suggestion was made that he should give any personal or other service to the State, it was resented as little better than a gross insult. Not only were these views ostentatiously avowed, but, as they had learnt within the last few days from admissions made by noble Lords on the Government side of the House, the Labour leaders who represented the voice of the trade unions intended to do their utmost to prevent any man who had been foolish enough to enlist in the Army from obtaining employment when he left the Army. If those were the opinions entertained by the country it would be a bad look out for the country as a nation. But for his part he declined to believe that that was the case. He did not believe that in this particular instance these men represented the working classes or any class in the country.

It was matter for infinite regret that the Government, with its overwhelming majority, should have made this contemptible and ignoble surrender to the Labour leaders. The Bill was in a critical condition; a severe blow administered to it might endanger its existence altogether. If the scheme was going to fail, as of course it was, he advised their Lordships to let its failure rest on those who were responsible for bringing it in.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH wished to deal with one point mentioned by the Under-Secretary. The noble Earl had stated that drill was of no use under the age of fifteen. In common with our older admirals he began rifle or rather musket drill at the age of thirteen. Before he was fourteen he had bruised his shoulder a good deal in firing Old Brown Bess at a target. That inconvenience was now got over by the use of miniature rifles. If any of their Lordships doubted the advantage of early drill he hoped they would consult the Admirals who were his contemporaries. Had he or any midshipmen of that time left the Navy at the age of sixteen they would have been efficient members of any Volunteer corps, and would have been able to use a rifle without imperilling the lives of their comrades, if sudden emergency had arisen. From twelve to sixteen boys could be more easily spared than at a later period when they had begun a profession or trade. If they took no steps to teach the rising generation how to protect the liberty that they had inherited, they might be rearing the future serfs of some other nation.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My Lords, I do not rise to prolong this debate. Everything that I desire to say upon this Amendment has been said by noble Lords who have spoken in support of it. But I do not like to give a silent vote, and I rise for the purpose of saying that when we go to a Division I shall certainly give my vote in favour of my noble friend Lord Methuen's Amendment. I am not in the least intimidated by the argument founded upon privilege to which we have listened. I have been a long time a member of this House, and I know that whenever one's opponent is at a loss for an argument this argument of privilege is trotted out. According to the extreme supporters of the privilege view, this House is precluded from dealing with any subject which directly or indirectly involves the expenditure of half-a-crown. If that view is to prevail, the usefulness of this House will be limited to an even greater extent than is recommended by the supporters of some of the proposals which are now before the public.

This Amendment cannot be represented as an Amendment antagonistic to the Bill. The words which we propose to leave out were not in the original Bill, and we have our own idea of the circumstances under which they found a place in it. What the Amendment of my noble friend does is to remove a restriction—as it seems to me an improper restriction—which it has been sought to put upon the usefulness of these County Associations—a restriction which will have the effect of preventing them from doing work of a kind which they are eminently qualified to do. You tell them in this Bill that it is to be part of their duty to assist cadet corps and rifle clubs. I ask upon what reasons of common-sense can you tell them that if those rifle clubs are joined by lads below the age of sixteen the association is to be absolutely forbidden from recognising or countenancing them?

The noble Earl in charge of the Bill told us that this was not a proper way of spending Army funds, but, as my noble friend Lord Camperdown has pointed out, we know quite well that these associations will dispose of funds the whole of which will not be drawn from Army sources; and if this clause were to pass as it now stands, the associations would be in this ridiculous position, that they might have considerable funds subscribed from private sources, and would find themselves precluded from spending one sixpence in assisting these cadet corps or rifle clubs. I am not prepared to take upon myself the responsibility of thus limiting the action of the County Associations, and I shall therefore certainly vote for the Amendment.

*THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Earl of CREWE): My Lords, like the noble Marquess who has just sat down I do not desire to spend any time in discussing the question of privilege. At the same time, as it has been stated with such certainty that this is not a breach of privilege, I think it is important to point out that, in view of the wording of the Commons' Resolution relating to the purposes and conditions of any money grant, this Amendment, if it is carried, may very likely be taken in another place to constitute a breach of privilege. But the question of privilege has nothing whatever to do with His Majesty's Government, and there is nothing to prevent noble Lords from carrying Amendment after Amendment which constitutes a breach of privilege. It is not the affair of the Government. It is a question for Mr. Speaker and the officials of the House of Commons. If this Amendment goes to the other House, no doubt it will receive proper attention from Mr. Speaker and the officials of that House.

Now I desire to say a very few words on the merits of the case. My noble friend behind me was quite right in saying that it is not on the ground of a dread of militarism that we are unable to assent to this Amendment. There are people who conceive that to teach boys of tender age drill and the use of the rifle is necessarily to develope in them a taste for slaughter. I respect people who hold that view honestly, but I confess it does not seem to me a very sensible view, and I do not believe it is widely held. We all remember that the South African War produced in this country some very real and fine manifestations of patriotism. It also produced a certain number—not many—of silly and rather ignoble exhibitions of what was held to pass as patriotism. But those exhibitions were not the work of people who had undergone any military training. The people who made fools of themselves were, I believe, people of strictly pacific habits, who had never seen a shot fired in anger, and probably never intended to if they could help it. Therefore from that point of view I have no dread of what is called military training.

But we have to consider what is behind this proposition in the mind of a great many people, as indeed was frankly admitted by the noble and gallant Field Marshal on the cross benches. A large number of people regard this proposition with distaste because they believe that it is a step towards what some call conscription, but what, in deference to the noble and gallant Earl, I will speak of as universal military training. I am bound to say that in spite of the noble and gallant Earl's very lucid description of the difference between the two the extent of that difference is not very clear to my mind. It still seems to me that if you have universal military training in this country you will have something very much like the conscript army as understood on the Continent of Europe.

SEVERAL NOBLE LORDS: No, no!

*THE EARL OF CREWE: I take it that your Army for Home Defence will consist of the young men who are at the time undergoing military training. It has never occurred to me that you would have an immense force of young men undergoing training and a large Home Defence Army as well. Therefore, it appears to me that the distinction is not a very wide one. But I will let that pass. In the minds of many people there is the fear that this proposition is intended to facilitate the advance to a system of universal military training. If you train these boys on a large scale, with public money, the next step surely will be to say: "What a waste not to turn these boys into real soldiers." It seems to me that argument is a very natural one, and I believe it is that fear which is really at the back of the minds of those who object to this particular proposal. I am not ashamed to say that, like other members of the Government, I do not think it is wise in a matter of this kind to go against a great current of public opinion, and I do not see how it can be denied, after what has occurred in another place, that such a body of opinion exists.

The noble Lord opposite, Lord Newton, has put aside entirely the opinion of those who are known as the Labour Members of Parliament. We are not able to take that position, for the very excellent reason that they do speak, as we believe, for, I do not say the whole, but a very great majority, of those who would be affected by this provision, and for the working classes at large. We in this House are in no way affected by this proposition, and it does seem to me somewhat absurd altogether to ignore the representatives of the particular class whose children will be affected by the passing of this Amendment. I do not think the noble Marquess who has just sat down appreciated that this limitation applies only to schools in receipt of the Government grant. He spoke of all boys under sixteen not being assisted. This is only the case where the school is in receipt of the Government grant; and it is because we believe that those specially affected have a strong prejudice against this proposal that we do not think it right to press it against them. In regard to public schools, the case is an entirely different one. The reason for encouraging drill and rifle shooting and training generally in public schools is that it is hoped they will form a very valuable reservoir for officers of the Army. The two cases are not analogous, and consequently I am sorry to say, in spite of all the arguments addressed to the House I admit by those who are most competent to speak on military matters, we are not able to retreat from the position we have taken up on this matter.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord LOREBURN said he entirely agreed with his noble friend Lord Crewe that the partisans of militarism during the South African War were not the brave men who fought and who suffered heavily, but a number of persons, largely in the Press, who had not the slightest intention of running any risk themselves. The proposal before their Lordships affected children who were mostly the children of working-class parents, and those parents were the persons who made objection to this proposal. He thought it was a very serious matter for either House of Parliament to try and thrust upon children a particular kind of training, however desirable they might think it, when the fathers of those children did not themselves desire it. With regard to the question of privilege, he could not help thinking that it would be a misfortune if the rule and custom that had been observed by both Houses should be infringed. It seemed to him there was no doubt that this Amendment, if it was assented to, would be an interference with the Commons' Resolution. He could not doubt that it would be resisted and objected to in the other House, and he could not assent to the suggestion of the noble Earl, Lord Rosebery, that an Amendment which was quite certain to be rejected, and which was also contrary to privilege, ought, as a matter of policy, to be carried.

*THE EARL OF HALSBURY said he had frequently endeavoured to preserve the Commons' privilege from invasion, sometimes a little more earnestly than some of his friends desired. He entirely differed from his distinguished friend. When they dealt with some particular part of a statute and severed it from the rest of the provisions, so that the effect of an alteration was only incidental, it had been held over and over again in both Houses that no breach of privilege was involved. That was the case here. The noble and learned Lord seemed to have forgotten that this Amendment would restore the Bill to the position in which it was when the Government introduced it. If the Amendment was open to these objections, why did not the Government find it out before the Bill was introduced?

On Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause,"

Their Lordships divided:—Contents, 31; Not-contents, 130.

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LORD LOVAT moved to delete from the duties of the County Association the provision of horses for the peace requirements of the Territorial Force. He submitted that the provision of horses was the duty of Yeomanry officers, as it obviously came under training.

Amendment moved—

"In page 4, lines 14 and 15, to leave out paragraph (*g*)."—(*Lord Lovat.*)

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said the Government could not accept the Amendment. They thought that the provision of horses for the Territorial Force was essentially a question for the Associations, which would possess extensive local knowledge and were on that account better able to deal with it.

LORD LOVAT intimated that he did not intend to press the Amendment, but he could not help pointing to the absurd position which would be created in the event of the County Associations producing horses which the Yeomanry colonels were unable to use.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

LORD MONTAGU OF BEAULIEU moved to omit Subsection (*h*), conferring on the County Associations powers in regard to "the safe custody of arms and equipment." He expressed the view that the custody of arms and equipment should be entrusted to the commanding officer, and not to the County Assocations, because he was responsible for keeping them clean, etc.

Amendment moved—

"In page 4, line 16, to leave out Paragraph (*h*)."—(*Lord Montagu of Beaulieu.*)

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said that if the County Associations had to provide arms and equipment out of the funds allocated to them by the Army Council, and generally to maintain the county force, they were surely the natural and proper repository of the arms. He could not accept the Amendment.

THE EARL OF ERROLL asked who would be responsible for the arms supposing the general inspecting found fault with them. Would the colonel commanding the regiment or the County Association be responsible?

LORD LOVAT said that under the arrangement proposed by the Government it would be necessary to have two caretakers, one man responsible for the care of the arms and for seeing that they were kept in an efficient state, and the other responsible to the local Association for their custody.

LORD LUCAS said the fact that the County Associations would be responsible for the arms and equipment would not prevent them placing the arms in charge of the commanding officer of the regiment if found necessary. The commanding officer would then be responsible for them, and there would be no need to provide two caretakers.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said he was a little astonished to hear that the County Associations were to provide the arms; but surely it could not be the intention of the Government to give them the right of determining what arms His Majesty's troops were to bear. Was it to be possible for conflicting orders to be given by the County Association and the commanding officer as to the state and custody of the arms, and, in such a contingency, was the commanding officer to be subordinate to the County Association?

LORD LUCAS said it was hardly conceivable that the County Association would give orders as to the custody of the arms which were at variance with the requirements of the officers in command.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND said the commanding officers were at present responsible to the War Office for the state of the arms. It was now proposed to make the associations responsible, but it was said that if the associations had any common sense they would hand over the custody of the arms to the commanding officers. Now, in the event of a commanding officer letting the arms get rusty and in a bad condition, what would happen? There would, no doubt, be some form of inspection by the War Office. What would the War Office do in that event? Would the association, as declared in the Bill be responsible, or could they say they had handed over the responsibility to the commanding officer and that the War Office must deal with him? The safe custody of arms was a very important matter, particularly at times of public disturbance, and it had always been understood that arms which were given to local forces had to be lodged in buildings approved of by an inspecting officer representing the War Office. Was the safe custody of the arms to be left in future entirely to the association, or were they to be subject to any control in the matter by the War Office? He hoped the Committee would have some further information on those points.

*LORD BELPER said that so far as he could see, the governing words were those at the beginning of sub-section (2) of Clause 2, which ran—

"The powers and duties so transferred or assigned may include any powers conferred on or vested in His Majesty, and any powers or duties conferred or imposed on the Army Council or a Secretary of State."

Therefore, what were to be transferred to the County Associations were powers now vested in the Secretary of State or the Army Council. Whether that was a convenient procedure or not seemed to him rather a nice point. But, so far as he could understand, the confusion between the County Associations and the officers commanding the regiments in the county need not necessarily be more than the confusion between the Army Council or the Secretary of State and those same officers. It did not seem to him that the powers of officers commanding regiments were taken away, but that the powers of the Army Council and the Secretary of State were transferred.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND held that this made the matter more difficult, because the powers of the Secretary of State were paramount. Therefore, if those powers were transferred, the Associations, which would be composed largely of civilians, would be paramount in these important matters.

*VISCOUNT MIDLETON suggested the insertion of the words, "The provision of buildings for," before the words "the safe custody of arms and equipment." He believed that would satisfy those who objected to the sub-section as it stood, and would really carry out the intention of the Government.

LORD MONTAGU OF BEAULIEU inquired whether the commanding officer or the County Association would be responsible in the event of the armoury being broken into by a mob and the arms stolen.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH thought the County Association would be responsible. With regard to the suggestion made by Lord Midleton, he suggested that in order that they might make this point quite clear he should be allowed to bring up words on Report.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND inquired what the noble Earl would bring up on Report. The Committee were not quite clear on that point. The noble Earl had just stated that the County Association would be responsible for the safe custody of the arms. That was what noble Lords objected to. It had been admitted that the Association could not practically be responsible, and that it must hand over the care of the arms to the commanding officer. He would object very much to anything being put in on Report to provide that the Association should be responsible for the care of the arms. But if the noble Earl intended moving to insert on Report some words such as were suggested by Lord Midleton, and if he would add "subject to the approval of some military authority," it would meet his point.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said this was rather a technical question, and he wished to provide that there should be proper security in the matter. Therefore, with the permission of their Lordships, he would consider the matter between then and the Report stage, with a view to inserting words which would make the meaning plain and clear.

LORD MONTAGU OF BEAULIEU was quite willing to withdraw the Amendment, if the noble Earl would undertake to make it clear as to which part was to be the duty of the County Association, and which part that of the commanding officer.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH promised to make that clear.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

LORD LOVAT moved an Amendment to provide that the requirements on mobilisation of the units of the Territorial Force (the duty of supplying which might be transferred under the clause to the County Associations) so far as they are directed by the Army Council to be met locally, should be defined by the Army Council before the passing of the Bill. He said that he brought up the point in no hostile spirit to the scheme, but because, although the Bill dealt with a great many points which Yeomanry and Volunteer officers had pressed for, yet there were no adequate arrangements for mobilisation. That was not the first time he had addressed their Lordships on this subject, and he would therefore make his remarks on the present occasion as brief as possible. They had made practically little or no progress since the South

African War in the way of preparing for mobilisation for home defence. No one could say that either the Yeomanry or the Volunteer Force was in any way capable of taking the field. It was true that arrangements for coast defence had been pushed forward, but really sufficient and adequate arrangements for mobile corps inland had not been thoroughly thought out in detail. He would, therefore, suggest that the Army Council should be asked to define with the utmost possible rapidity what the requirements were to be that the County Associations were to meet. Every year they had been told, when they pressed this question, from whichever side of the House the Government of the day happened to be drawn, that the Army Council had wonderful things in store for them if they would only wait a little. They had waited a long time now; and, although the subject had been brought up by numberless noble Lords, including Field-Marshal Lord Roberts, yet they had never been given a scheme which would in any way fulfil the requirements. He thought that as the majority of the Army Council had now been at the War Office for something like four years, the requirements that they wished to be met by the County Associations should have been thoroughly deliberated upon; and that the time had come when those requirements ought to be announced. He hoped the noble Earl would not retire behind the usual official answer to such questions that it was inadvisable that the facts should be made public. The whole of Europe was thoroughly aware that we had no Home organisation; and he thought that an announcement of any plan towards that end would be so much clear gain; and that the publication of any orders which the Government might issue to the County Associations need not be delayed on that account. He would not go into the questions of the staff, the transport, and all the various matters with regard to horses and equipment, but would only deal with one or two general principles which he thought must in any event hold good, and which, he felt certain, the House would accept. It was essential to have these preparations thought out in time of peace; because the less trained men they had for the Army, the more trained must be the staff in order to make good the defences of the country; and further, the less trained were the troops, the better must be the arrangements as to feeding, tents, and so on; because the less trained the troops were, the less strain and difficulty were they able to withstand. Therefore he thought His Majesty's Government should be pressed if possible to let them know when those requirements would be made known to the County Associations. There was a point which arose now which had not arisen in former Acts with regard to mobilisation, and that was the question of billeting. By this Bill, power was taken to call out a very large number of men—in fact, the whole of the Territorial Force; but, as far as he knew, if they were called out, there was nowhere to put them. In Scotland, certainly, there was nothing like tent accommodation for the whole forces of Scotland; and he believed the same could be said with regard to every single command throughout the country. Where were they to put the men? They could not be away for more than a few days, and the only billeting places at present were the public-houses, and the public-house was the one place where the men should never be allowed to go if it could possibly be helped. He hoped the noble Lord would be able to tell them what arrangements had been made with regard to that point; because, on the calling out of the Territorial Army, if it should become necessary, the only thing His Majesty's Government would be able to do would be to dismiss it again, because they would have nowhere to put it. The remainder of the mobilisation arrangements at the present moment were in practically the same unthought-out state. With regard to the staff, the staff was practically, as they knew, non-existent. They were going to have, by the Bill, four staff officers provided for the whole of Scotland—that was all they had been told at present—two divisions with two staff officers each. The County Associations would have enough work to do in finding the minor officers on the staff. The question of horse registration had been often discussed in that House, and need not then be gone into further; but he hoped His Majesty's Government would see fit to make public what they required from the County Associations.

Amendment moved—

"In page 4, line 20, after the word 'locally,' to insert the words 'which requirements shall be defined by the Army Council before the passing of this Act.'"—(*Lord Lovat.*)

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said it was quite impossible to put a statutory provision of the kind proposed into an Act of Parliament. The matters referred to were all of very great importance, and he could assure his noble friend they were being most carefully considered by the general staff. They were, obviously, as it seemed to him, matters for Regulations under the Act, but he could not put them in as a statutory provision before the passing of the Act.

*EARL FORTESCUE asked whether, upon the Report stage, his noble friend would consider whether this clause might not be amended in the direction of utilising the County Associations for certain requirements of the Regular Forces as well as the Territorial Force. There was nothing said in Subsection (k) about the registration of vehicles as well as of horses. Vehicles would be wanted as much as horses in the event of mobilisation, and he imagined that if the Expeditionary Force was ever sent away to the number of 160,000 men they would want very likely to take more vehicles than the Army Service wagons in store at Woolwich, and there were other things besides which might be available from local sources. It had been proposed, he believed, by the correspondent of *The Times* that the different divisions of Regulars in the country should each have allotted to them one or more counties from which to draw horses and vehicles in case of mobilisation; and he would ask his noble friend to give consideration to that matter before the Report stage, and, if necessary, to propose an Amendment of this sub-clause accordingly.

*VISCOUNT MIDLETON thought all their Lordships, including His Majesty's Government, would sympathise with the object which his noble friend had in view. It was obvious that to raise a large Territorial Force, and to leave in abeyance any longer the provision for mobilisation of that Force, would be injurious to the last degree. At the same time he fully recognised the plea of the noble Earl that it was impossible for the Government to lay down those requirements before the passing of the Act. He would ask the Government whether it was not possible to amend Lord Lovat's Amendment, and to allow these words to be inserted, "According to the scheme which shall be made by the Army Council upon the passing of this Act." He thought those words would entirely carry out the wish of the Government, and would also give effect to the desire of his noble friend Lord Lovat.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said he should not like to go quite as far as the suggestion of his noble friend; he would prefer to say, "as soon as possible," instead of "upon the passing of this Act." The former words would not tie the Government down to any particular date. They wanted, of course, to do it as quickly as they could, but did not wish to be bound to do it "upon the passing of this Act."

*VISCOUNT MIDLETON said that it seemed to him that the words "upon the passing of this Act" would practically mean "as soon as possible."

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said he would consider the form of words with a view to seeing whether it was not possible for the Government to meet his noble friend in some way.

EARL OF ONSLOW: Does the noble Lord press his Amendment?

LORD LOVAT: No.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

*EARL FORTESCUE, in moving an Amendment to provide for the establishment of corps of civilian guides, said that it was well known that even in the case of an Army operating in a friendly country it was often desirable to make use, for some purposes, of local guides. The object of the Amendment he proposed was to allow the County Associations to take steps to organise and register such persons beforehand. He was aware that that had been done in one or two districts in this country with comparatively little trouble or expense. The officer commanding the Royal Artillery in the North-East District had organised a corps there, and having heard from him what he had done, he himself (Earl Fortescue) had succeeded in a small way in organising a similar corps in the district from which the North Devon Yeomanry were recruited. At that time he commanded that regiment, the recruiting ground of which extended from the borders of Somerset to the borders of Cornwall, and in a short time, and by the expenditure of only a few pounds in circulars and postage-stamps, he had been able to get the names of over 150 people who declared their readiness to come forward in case of necessity to help the troops by means of their local knowledge. They were not frontiersmen or backwoodsmen, or anything of that sort; they were simply natives of the locality, such as past and present masters of hounds, and hunt servants, road surveyors, county councillors, farmers, and people of all classes, some of whom knew a great deal of country, while others knew only the gates, gaps, wood-paths, and so on in their own parishes. But if the regiment he had referred to had been mobilised, and had had to take up the duty assigned to it of patrolling the coast, he was certain that they would have derived very great assistance from the local knowledge of these people, who would have been able to show the men a great many paths of which they were previously ignorant: and there was no doubt they would have been enabled, in that way, to effect great economies of horse-flesh in carrying on their work. Among those whose names were given to him were men who could have taken a letter or guided a party for miles across the country, through woods and by by-paths, without ever going for a mile on a frequented road. He begged to move.

Amendment moved—

"In page 4, line 26, after the word 'soldiers' to insert '(*m*) Establishing corps of civilian guides.'"—(*Earl Fortescue.*)

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said the Amendment of his noble friend dealt with a matter which appeared to him to belong exclusively to the general staff, who did not consider that it would be necessary to have these words inserted. The general staff would undertake the full responsibility for making provision for the performance of the duties which any corps such as his noble friend suggested could be supposed to undertake in time of war. His Majesty's Government quite realised the importance and value of corps of that kind, and under the circumstances he would ask his noble friend not to press his Amendment, because it was a matter which the general staff wished to take entirely upon themselves.

THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE asked whether they were to understand that this was a suggestion the importance of which the general staff had fully realised. He had a very lively recollection, when he was at the War Office, of there being a very large pile of papers on this subject, and he did not remember any suggestion in those papers unfriendly to the proposal of the noble Earl. He sincerely hoped that this matter—which, he ventured to say, would, if carried out, provide a most valuable auxiliary machinery to the general staff—would not be lost sight of, because he was certain that the Government, if they could see their way to taking any such step, would have the unanimous support of the whole country.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said that his noble friend, Lord Donoughmore, accurately interpreted his intention—that the general staff had fully realised the great importance of the proposal. He was very glad the discussion had taken place, because it had given him an opportunity of stating to the House that the general staff recognised its full and complete responsibility in the matter, and he had been asked by them to state that it was a matter which they would prefer to take upon themselves.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I rather hope that my noble friend (Earl Fortescue) will accept the noble Earl's suggestion and withdraw his Amendment. I would remind him that this list does not profess to be an exhaustive enumeration of the duties of the County Associations, and the mere fact that the corps of guides are not mentioned by name will not in itself preclude the County Associations from dealing with that point.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn,

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 3:—

*LORD SALTOUN, in moving the omission of the words "in the opinion of the Army Council" from Sub-clause (1), which provided for the payment by the Army Council to a County Association the sums required to meet the necessary expenditure connected with the exercise and discharge of the powers and duties of the Association, said that he had put this Amendment on the Paper for the purpose of drawing more particular attention to the answers which the Under-Secretary for War had given to certain questions which were asked before their Lordships went into Committee yesterday. It seemed to him that those questions, which had been put by his noble friend, Lord Hardinge, were very important, and that they had been most inadequately answered. He would not go into the details of the questions, but the whole of them were answered to the effect that the grant of £75 per company of infantry was intended to cover the administrative expenses of the Association, and that it was hoped that the cost of the working of the County Associations would be kept as low as possible. The Under-Secretary for War had further said that the County Associations would no doubt require office accommodation, and the Bill provided for the appointment of a secretary, who presumably would be a salaried official, and who would require large offices and additional assistants for book-keeping and so on. So far as he could understand, the whole of those funds were bound to come out of the £75 per company spoken of by the Under-Secretary, for he could not see what other source those funds were to come from, so far as had at present been pointed out by the Government. In fact they had pointed out no way, and the result was that while there was not the smallest doubt that these County Associations might be enormously expensive especially at their starting, the sum proposed was utterly and entirely inadequate for the purpose. The Under-Secre- for War had also, he believed, said that if there was an outstanding debt incurred by the Association it would have to come out of the pockets of the members of the Association. Under those circumstances it would be, he considered, almost impossible to get any person of standing in a county to act on an association.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH apologised for interrupting the noble Lord, but he might perhaps be allowed to suggest that the noble Lord should allow the House in the first place to dispose of his Amendment, and that when their Lordships came to deal with the question whether Clause 3 should stand part of the Bill, then would be the time to raise the other question upon the general question of finance. He would be quite happy to deal with the matter then, but he thought it would be rather awkward to take it in conjunction with the Amendment now before the House.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND pointed out that if that course were pursued it would be impossible to amend the clause. What they wanted to do was, in the first place, to get answers from the Government in order to see whether it was necessary to move Amendments to the clause.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said that he had no objection, if the House so desired, to having a general discussion of the financial clauses on the present Amendment. It did not really matter at all to the Government, and it was for the House to decide what they would like done. His only object in raising the point had been to prevent the discussion of the same subject twice over.

LORD SALTOUN said he had put the Amendment on the Paper because he did not see any other part of the Bill in which the question could be possibly raised. He was quite aware that the title of the clause was "Expenses of the Association," and that that might be called the money clause of the Bill. Still, as that was the only clause on which the subject, as far as he could see, could be in any way discussed, it had struck him that that was the right moment to bring forward his Amendment. Of course he was in the hands of the House.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: Perhaps I may be allowed to say that we do not at all complain of the course the noble Lord has taken. On the contrary, it seems to me a very good way of raising a discussion on the financial question in the Bill. All that my noble friend the Earl of Portsmouth wished to guard against was having a discussion on the financial question now and having it again later on.

THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE thought it was absolutely unnecessary to guard against what he considered exceedingly unlikely to happen. Because, as this was the only Amendment to the clause, it could hardly be supposed that there would be two discussions upon the same question within a few minutes of each other.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: I am not at all sure that there is not great danger of that.

*LORD SALTOUN said that he would not detain their Lordships long; but he had thought it his duty to bring up the subject. He would be glad to hear what the Under-Secretary for War had to tell them upon a subject which was felt to be most important by a great number of people. It was quite certain that if a man gave his services to the public he ought to be guarded against having to put his hand into his pocket in order to relieve the association or the War Office. He thought there should be some statement from the Under-Secretary for War as to what he really meant by the Answers which he had given on the previous evening, which, on the face of them, it was absolutely impossible for him (Lord Saltoun) to understand, and which the Leader of the Opposition himself seemed unable to make head or tail of. He had been asked by Lord Blythswood to say that on the Report stage he proposed to move an Amendment—

"That no pecuniary liability should attach to any member of an association carrying out the duties imposed by this Act."

Lord Blythswood had been obliged to leave the House, and had asked him just to mention his (Lord Blythswood's) intention. He did not know if it was in order to put it down, and he would content himself with simply stating that Lord Blythswood proposed to take that course. In conclusion he would like to hear from the Under-Secretary for War that the members of these associations would be cleared from all expenses incidental to the associations.

Amendment moved—

"In page 4, line 29, to leave out 'in the opinion of the Army Council.'"—(*Lord Saltoun.*)

*LORD HAVERSHAM wished to mention a concrete instance which, he thought, would shew the noble Lord that he was under considerable misapprehension with regard to the money that would be paid to these local associations. In the preceding clause the county associations had to provide and maintain rifle ranges and so on. It was not supposed that out of the £75 per company they could do anything of that sort; and if his noble friend would consult the Army Estimates he would see that there was a sum of £467,000 voted by Parliament for the establishment and maintenance of rifle ranges amongst other things. The words in the clause now under discussion were—

"The Army Council shall pay to an association, out of money voted by Parliament for Army services, such sums,"

and so on. The money would have been voted by Parliament, and all that he imagined this Bill would do was to authorise the paying over to the new associations of any money which might be locally spent by them. He thought that was quite a different thing from what his noble friend was alluding to with regard to the £75 per company. Of course, that was a sum which they would have to use for the particular purposes stated in their budget. They had to send up every year to the Army Council a budget of all their requirements, and if there was any particular requirement which would cost a good deal of money, he was informed officially that they would have to make a particular demand for it, and then that demand would be considered. At the same time it was supposed that their ordinary expenses would be covered by the amount granted per company. Whether that was so or not, he did not know; but the County Associations would have to put down every item in their budget, which would be very carefully examined into by the Finance Department of the War Office, and subsequently passed by the local auditors.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND said that if he understood the Bill rightly there were two sources of income which these associations were to have which might be devoted to the purposes mentioned in the Bill. Rifle ranges were mentioned in the Bill, and he understood from the noble Lord (Lord Haversham) that rifle ranges were not to come out of the £75 per company. If that was so, it was very interesting to know it. But what he would submit was that the Under-Secretary of State for War should lay upon the Table of the House, if possible, something like a draft scheme of expenditure, and so let them know what was and what was not to come out of the £75, and who was to be liable for any miscarriage of funds. He apologised to the House for speaking so often, but the questions upon this clause were really the same questions as those which arose on the former clause; and the inquiries he was now about to make were really a continuation and a part of the inquiries he had made upon the former clause. The first question he wished to ask the noble Lord was that which he had just stated, namely, could he give them some estimate of the receipts and expenditure of an average County Association? What would be the necessary and unavoidable expenses of that association? He had just jotted down one or two things which had occurred to him. First there would be the rent of the offices, and in some large towns good offices were very often expensive places to rent. Then there would be the salary of the secretary. The secretary was to be a gentleman, as he understood, of high standing; he was to be accountable (whatever that meant) to the Army Council; he was to be appointed by the Army Council, and he was to be the medium of communication between the Army Council and the association. It struck him very strongly that if that were really the case the secretary would really be the association, because he would evidently have the ear of the Army Council. He would have morally, if not actually, the control of the purse. He could not see that there was very much left for the association to do. The salary of the secretary, he imagined, would be a fairly considerable one. Many officials of county councils received £600 or £800 a year, and sometimes more, and he supposed it would be something of that calibre which the secretary of this association would expect. Then the secretary would want an army of clerks. Had the Government really considered what some of the duties which they imposed upon the association meant? There was one in Subsection (*e*) for instance—

> "Arranging with employers of labour as to holidays for training, and ascertaining the times of training best suited to the circumstances of civil life."

What an amount of correspondence and of interviews that would necessitate! Then Subsection (*l*) dealt with the care of reservists and discharged soldiers. He had had some experience of that, and of the enormous amount of correspondence and inquiries entailed thereby. Indeed, he thought that if they were to provide properly for discharged soldiers they would have to have some organisation of visitors who would see the men in their homes, as the Charity Organisation did, and test their accounts and so on. All that meant work for the officials. He would not detain the House by going through all the various matters in detail, but he might extend such examples to almost any extent. Taking the various subsections of Clause 2, what did they mean? They meant an amount of clerical work, to mention no other, which was simply stupendous. Then there would be travelling expenses for officials—they would have to do a certain amount of travelling about looking after the discharged soldiers, interviewing employers, and doing other business. He had also put down on his list "Stationery and Postage"; that might sound trivial to some of their Lordships, but he did not know that it would be such a very small amount when it came to be totalled up, with the books and everything which would be required. Then they would have to provide for the care of the offices; and, altogether, he wished to ask the Government whether they had made any estimate of any sort or kind as to what the expenditure of the association under such heads as those would be. He was quite aware that the Government might answer that they had not decided exactly what work they were going to put upon the associations, that these clauses were merely permissive, and that they could not tell what the cost would be until they had decided how much they intended to avail themselves of the powers which Parliament was to entrust them with. That, of course, was perfectly true, but there must be limits to it. The Government seemed to be in the position of a man who was asking an architect what it would cost to build a hospital; and when the architect asked how large the hospital was to be, he was told: "I don't know how many beds there will be; I cannot tell you yet." The architect says, "What sort of sum have you got to spend on the hospital?" and the reply he receives is, "Oh, a ten-pound note." It was quite clear that that would be inadequate; and that was, it seemed to him, exactly the position of the Government in this matter. He thought the House might possibly be given some indication that such-and-such duties were to be undertaken by the County Associations, that their cost would be so much, that there would be so many duties, and so on. He wanted to ask a question which seemed to him of vital importance to everyone who was to be on one of these associations: What was to happen if the expenditure of the association exceeded its income? There was nothing more likely, because it was going to undertake an absolutely new work; it had got to feel its way, and a good deal of pressure would be put upon it from various sources for expenditure. What was to happen, supposing there was a miscalculation? And, out of that arose another question that he wished to put to the noble Lord. The noble Lord had spoken yesterday of the corporate liability of the association. What did "corporate liability" mean in that connection? As far as he understood, all corporations which had corporate liability either had property of their own, which they might sell if they got into debt, or they had powers of raising a rate, or they had both opportunities. But what was the corporate liability of an association which had no property at all? It did not mean the liability of the individuals, because that would not be a corporate liability. Then, what was the liability? Finally, he wished to ask a question which arose out of the debate upon the previous clause. From what sources was the association to expect money, if any, other than that supplied to it from the Department of the Government? He did not wish to raise the old argument about privilege, but the whole contention that that was a breach of privilege depended upon the fact that the money which was being dealt with under that clause was derived from grants by Parliament; and that would lead one to the conclusion that the only matters which the association had to deal with were grants by Parliament. He wanted to put the question in this form. It had been said yesterday that a great deal had been done in the past by generous individuals in respect of Volunteer corps and other branches of the local Forces. Supposing an enthusiastic and patriotic individual chose to give to an association some money to be spent on, say, drilling boys under the age of sixteen, was he to be capable of doing that, or was he not? That would not be money derived from Parliament. He would have thought there was nothing more likely than that somebody in a county who felt very strongly with the gallant Field Marshal who had spoken so eloquently in favour of training boys, some sympathiser with that view, should give money to an association for that purpose. Would that be lawful or would it not? What were the sources—that really was his question put shortly—what were the sources of income which an association was to look to; what was it probable the money derived from those various sources would amount to; what was the probable expenditure of the association; and, finally, what was the liability of the association, supposing they should outrun their income?

LORD **RAGLAN** said that the difficulty he saw with regard to the money was this: First of all, the clause now under consideration was really the entire Bill, and all the rest was practically merely accessory. To those who, like himself, might find themselves in the position of being president of one of these associations, it was a matter of very great importance; because, first of all, the information they had received on the subject was extraordinarily vague; and, secondly, they did not know to what claims against them it might lead. There were only two points which he should like to put to the noble Lord the Under-Secretary for War with regard to this expenditure. In the first place, there was the question of the £75 per company. That sum was mentioned in an exceedingly airy manner, and they had been told, "Oh! £75 a company!" He wanted to know what that £75 was. Was it a maximum; that was to say, that no company would ever get more than £75? Or was it a minimum; that was to say, that no company would ever get less than £75? Or was it the average sum which would be spread out over all the companies, some getting more, and some getting less, but the £75 being the average of the amounts which the whole of the associations would receive? The expenses of administering the Act would vary most amazingly between county and county, and still more between regiment and regiment. For instance, if they took a compact urban battalion of Volunteers, of which the whole of the men lived within a mile of their headquarters, and compared the expenses of such a battalion with the expenses of a rural battalion, with its companies scattered up and down a county running perhaps to hundreds of square miles, they would find that there would be an enormous additional expense in the latter case by the attempt to organise it up to anything approaching the efficiency of an urban corps. He would also like to know what the word "organisation" meant in the phrase "organisation of the units of the Territorial Force." Did the words "organisation of units" mean merely the formation, or did it mean the general administration of those units: because the word "administration" was used after that—"and their administration." Surely the War Office had in their minds some sort of idea of what they thought it would cost to organise and administer an ordinary average battalion consisting of the ordinary number of companies, say, from eight to ten. He thought the House ought to be told whether or not some sort of idea was in the minds of the War Office as to what the actual cost was to be.

VISCOUNT **ESHER** wished to ask the noble Earl whether His Majesty's Government was in any way bound to the figure of £75 per company, or whether that was anything more than a rough estimate of the probable expenditure of the Territorial Army?

*THE EARL OF **PORTSMOUTH** claimed the indulgence of the House for going into the rather difficult question of figures, and said that perhaps before replying to the various questions put to him (which he would endeavour to answer so far as he could follow them) it might be to the convenience of the House if he gave their Lordships, rather in layman's language, an account of what the financial position would be under the clause. This clause had been the subject of a great deal of scrutiny and examination in the House of Commons; and it had been drawn up very carefully in negotiation with the Treasury. Under the present *régime* the commanding officer in a Yeomanry or Volunteer regiment received the whole of the funds which had been earned by his corps, and was solely responsible for administering his corps on those grants, supplemented by any private funds which might be forthcoming. That was a financial responsibility which had pressed very heavily on many commanding officers, and one of the benefits and advantages of the present Bill was that it removed that condition of things as far as possible. In future the War Office would have no financial dealings with the officer commanding a unit; the whole cost of training and instruction corresponding to the present camp and school grants would be met by the general commanding officer from funds allotted to him by the War Office; and the financial administration of the corps during the rest of the year would devolve upon the associations, and not upon the commanding officers. He did not know whether their Lordships had seen a Parliamentary Paper which had been for some time circulated, Cd. 3296; it was a very technical Paper, and probably even if their Lordships saw it they might require to have had almost the experience of an accountant in order to make it out. But in that Parliamentary Paper the sums allotted to the associations for defraying the cost of the administration of units in each year would be based on, firstly, a grant per unit to meet the expenses which did not vary with the strength—those embraced general administrative expenses and the upkeep of drill halls, but did not include, necessarily, such things as rifle ranges; and, secondly, on grants per man to meet the cost of clothing and travel. The War Office would pay over every year to the associations the grants earned under those two heads, the distribution of those funds among the various units being left entirely to the discretion of the association. The grant for general administrative expenses was based upon the actual average expenditure of past years, a margin having been allowed for the administrative expenses of associations, which it was hoped would be kept at a minimum. The grant for clothing was based upon the actual cost of clothing, and the grants for headquarters, travelling and so forth would be based upon actual requirements. Commanding officers of the Territorial Force would be relieved of the financial responsibility which in the past had so heavily pressed upon them. As ordinary members of a sub-committee of the association, they might be called upon to administer such portions of the grant as the association might find it necessary to delegate to them, but even in such cases the responsibility would rest with the association. As had been explained in another place, the corps would be handed over to the associations as going concerns in a sound financial condition—that was to say, such debts outstanding at the time of transition as were not due to extravagant and unauthorised administration would be met out of public funds. Those were, as far as he was able to give them to their Lordships, the general outlines of what the effect of the clause and of the Government's proposals would be. The Duke of Northumberland had put to him certain questions which he would endeavour to the best of his ability to answer as specifically as he could, as also the question put by Lord Esher. The noble Duke had asked whether the Government could give him an estimate of the cost of these associations. He was afraid it would really be impossible at present to give any estimate of the receipts and administrative expenses of average County Associations as distinct from the expenditure now dealt with by commanding officers of Volunteer units. They had heard a great deal about the £75 grant. Lord Raglan had remarked that he (the Earl of Portsmouth) had "airily" mentioned it. The £75 grant appeared in the Paper to which he had already referred (Cd. 3296) of Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson. It was therefore not a mere casual sum. The £75 grant for which provision had been made in the Estimates would, they hoped, provide some margin to meet such expenditure; but until the associations themselves were in a position to indicate the requirements of their special localities, he was afraid, after having made very careful inquiries, that any Departmental Estimate would prove very misleading. It was a very important point, and one which would of course be very carefully considered when the scheme of each association came to be developed. Judging from what had been said, there appeared to have been a general idea that this £75 grant per company was a sort of fixed and hard and rigid sum, whereas the administrative grant of £75 per company was only an estimate based upon past experience, and he would like to take that opportunity of stating — as he was glad to do—that it was fully recognised by the Government that that sum might have to be varied in different cases, and that if it was not sufficient in any particular case, the necessary expenses of the association would have to be provided for to a larger extent from public funds. He hoped that that explanation had made the point quite clear. Then there was another point—he did not know whether it had been in the mind of the noble Duke, but one or two other gentlemen had written to him about it—and that was the question of what he might call the running account. In the event of the expenditure of an association exceeding its income, no cash settlement at the end of the year would be insisted upon by the War Office—they felt that they could not impose strict Treasury conditions in that respect in regard to these associations—but the liability would have to be taken into account by the association in disposing of its income during the following year.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND asked who was to bear the liability. The noble Lord had said that the liability must be taken into account. Was it a personal liability of the members of the association, or was it a corporate liability, and if the latter, what did corporate liability mean ?

***THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH** said he was rather glad that the noble Duke had asked him that question, because, as he had foreseen that in all human probability he himself might possibly, in the future, be a member of one of these associations, he had been very anxious to know what his own liability was going to be, and he had taken as keen an interest in the matter, and was as desirous of obtaining some satisfactory assurance on that point, as any of his noble friends on the other side of the House. With regard to what was a "corporate liability," although he was a lawyer, he was afraid he could not describe to the House exactly what that was, but he had made himself perfectly satisfied upon the point—which he was bound to say was good enough for him—as regarded his own position as a member of one of these associations; he had satisfied himself that no individual member of an association would be pecuniarily liable in any respect except in the case of fraud. He wished to apologise to their Lordships for having gone into these details of what he was afraid was an exceedingly difficult question. Before sitting down he would like to deal with the merits of the Amendment nominally before the House.

***THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE**: I would like to say just a word before the noble Earl proceeds to deal with that question.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND asked whether it would be convenient for him to put a question now or afterwards.

***THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH** confessed that questions were never very convenient in these matters when they were thrown across the Table, but if the noble Duke put a question, he would answer it to the best of his ability.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND said it was extremely satisfactory to all of them who might hereafter be presidents of these associations to know that they were not pecuniarily liable, but the question still returned upon him, Who was liable ? Where was the deficit, if any, to come from ?

***THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH** suggested that the noble Duke might put that question with greater effect to the noble Lord upon the Woolsack, who he regretted was not there at the moment.

***THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE**: The noble Lord has made a determined effort to remove a part of the obscurity which pervades this portion of the Bill, but I am afraid he has not been entirely successful in enlightening us. I should like to ask him, omitting all details, and in quite a general way, whether we rightly understand the procedure which will be followed with regard to the financial arrangements of these County Associations. I gather that every year each of the County Associations will have to prepare a kind of budget of its own. That budget will go up to the War Office, and will there be examined and revised by the Army Council. Upon these figures collectively Parliament will be asked to vote money in the Army Estimates. That money will be allocated by the Army Council county by county. Each association will then have to distribute its own grant, making that grant go as far as it can; and then I understand the noble Earl to tell us, that if, as seems only too likely (because we know that estimates which go up to the War Office are always cut down), the sum placed by the War Office at the disposal of the association is not sufficient to meet the necessary expenditure connected with the exercise and discharge by the association of its duties and powers, then will come the last act in the drama: the association sends the hat round for the deficit. I take it that is what will happen. The noble Earl vouchsafes further this information, which is interesting—that the association will have the privilege of running into debt at the end of the year, but the deficit will have eventually to be made good out of the grant of the following year. That is what I gathered from the noble Earl.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: May have to be made good.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: May have to be made good, if there is a deficit. That is the source to which the association will have to look, if there is a deficit—to the next year's grant. Is that so?

*THE EARL OF CREWE: Yes.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I am much obliged.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said that now that he had, as far as possible, made clear what was rather a difficult matter, he might perhaps be allowed to deal with the terms of the Amendment of Lord Saltoun. Lord Saltoun proposed to leave out the words "in the case of the Army Council." That was an Amendment which he was afraid it would not be possible for them to accept, because the effect of the Amendment would be to destroy the control over Army expenditure which the Army Council must necessarily retain in their hands subject to the general control of the Treasury, as set forth in Subsections (3) and (6) of the clause. The statements submitted by the various associations would, of course, like all other items of expenditure, be reviewed by the Army Council before inclusion in the Army Estimates. He hoped his noble friend would not press the Amendment. It was a very singular thing that a similar Amendment was moved in the House of Commons under the mistaken idea that it was to have the effect of bringing the control of Parliament more directly to bear upon the money to be given to these associations. He regretted that His Majesty's Government could not accept the Amendment. Was it the intention of the noble Lord to press it?

THO DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND said that the noble Lord (Lord Saltoun) had been obliged to leave the House, but had asked him to say that he was not desirous of pressing his Amendment. He would like to remind the noble Lord that he had not yet answered the question which he had put to him as to whether a patriotic individual desiring to subscribe money for the drilling of boys below the age of sixteen would be allowed to do it.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: Perhaps I might answer that question. The restriction, as the noble Lord will see, applies only to schools in receipt of a Parliamentary grant, and I suppose the noble Lord means by his question, could boys belonging to a school in receipt of a grant be drilled if the money for doing so was privately subscribed?

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND: Through an association.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: It could not be done through an association according to the terms of the Bill, unless, of course the Amendment which has just been negatived was allowed to stand. Further than that, it would undoubtedly be a matter for the Board of Education to decide as to whether they would allow such drilling to take place.

*VISCOUNT MIDLETON said that before leaving the subject of expenses he thought there was a great deal which still required clearing up, and although he did not desire to detain their Lordships a single moment unnecessarily, he would urge upon the Government whether it was not possible to lay upon the Table of the House some sort of estimate of what this £75 was intended to cover. So far as he knew, a sum of £225,000 was taken in all. That represented a sum of £75 per company or thereabouts, as far as he could calculate. When they came to put down the large charges which were involved in sub-section (*c*) for the provision and maintenance of rifle ranges, buildings, magazines, and so forth, those were very serious charges, and when the noble Earl told them that the general administration expenses would be taken at the cost at which they had hitherto been, he thought, although it was very fair that should be considered, that they would find that there were very great divergencies in the different corps, and that the cost to the country would be something infinitely greater than the noble Earl had any idea of. There was one other point which had not been taken up, and which he would urge the Government to consider. If they were to pass these words, "in the opinion of the Army Council"—which, of course, he quite realised must under the circumstances stand in the Bill—every single item of expenditure which the associations undertook must first be referred to the Army Council before they could undertake it, if they were to get the money refunded. Had their Lordships considered what would be the amount of correspondence between these various small War Offices and the main parent body if every item that had finally to be passed by the Army Council was to be discussed by letter between the secretary and the Army Council? He thought that it would be a good thing if some plan could be devised—and if they could see the Government scheme, he thought that perhaps they might help to devise it—by which a sum which really would cover the expenses in all cases—or should cover the expenses in all cases—should be allotted so that each individual item should not be made a matter of discussion. One point had interested him very much in the noble Earl's remarks. He had made what seemed to him the very singular observation that if the associations outran their income, the Army Council would not insist upon a cash settlement during that year. But the difficulty would be that the associations would have over-spent their money; it would not be a question of a cash settlement upon which the Army Council would insist, but of a cash settlement without which the associations would be bankrupt. There was no individual liability; there was no power to borrow; the associations had only two sources of funds—what the Army Council granted to them under this clause, and what they could raise, as his noble friend (the Duke of Northumberland) had said, by sending the hat round. What he feared was that too much of the time of these associations would be taken up in communicating with the War Office on the one hand as to what they might do, and, on the other hand, in sending out petitions broadcast to everyone in the county who had got money to spare to relieve them of some portion of a liability which they would otherwise undertake. They might not be able to do more than urge it upon the Government, but in the interest of the Government and of these schemes which they were going to put out, he thought it would be highly desirable for them to draw up for their Lordships some sort of model scheme for a battalion, or for an association, which would give some idea of whether the sum involved would be adequate to meet the needs of the association, and if not, show how those needs were to be met other than by appeals to the public, which the noble Earl had assured them it was not the desire of the Government should be made.

*LORD RIBBLESDALE said he would leave his noble friends below him to say whether the Government would be prepared to draw up the scheme with the various model regulations and requirements which he understood the noble Viscount to say he thought would be desirable. Although he had served for some years in the Army he did not intervene in the debate on that ground, but because the establishment of these County Associations must naturally bring in an extremely civilian complexion and many civilian considerations into the whole discussion of the Bill. That, he thought everybody would bear witness, had amply appeared in the course of the debate so far as it had gone. He was certain that noble Lords below him who represented His Majesty's Government would be the very last people to complain that noble Lords opposite and noble Lords on their own side had pressed them hard for a great many details. The Committee stage of a Bill was the right moment at which to bring forward those details in their most pungent form, and as far as possible to insist on answers to any questions which might arise. He agreed that some of the answers which had been given had not, perhaps, illuminated them very much, but he was certain that that was really not any fault of the noble Lord (the Earl of Portsmouth) or of the Government. It was inherent in a scheme of this sort that they must apply to it that motto which always was applied so successfully to English affairs, "*solvitur ambulando*," and a great many of the questions which had been asked could not be answered in the detailed terms in which those of their Lordships who were likely to have something to do hereafter with these County Associations, or who might possibly have to put their hands into their pockets to make good some of the deficiencies which might arise out of the conduct of affairs by these County Associations, would have liked to have had them answered. They all wanted to have questions answered and details given which he did not think they were likely to get answered or given. But he would recall the House to two main considerations. If he might say so, without imparting any sort of personal colour into the matter, he thought a good deal of what they had been listening to was what he would call "fears of the brave and follies of the wise." He believed himself that the whole reputation of the Army Council was bound up in the efficiency and the success of this scheme. He believed that the whole reputation of the Government was bound up in its economic—using the word in the sense of economy and thrift—administration. Under those circumstances he thought they must walk a little by faith, and believe that on the one hand the Army would not be starved by the Army Council, and, on the other hand, that they would not be put to any very great expense in connection with these County Associations. Perhaps he might put it in this way—that he did not think either that the Army would be starved or that money would be wasted under the proposals of the Government, for the reasons that on the one side they had the Army Council, whose reputation was bound up in efficiency, and on the other hand they had the success of the Government, which was bound up in producing a scheme which would secure that the Army should be conducted on economic and business principles.

LORD MONTAGU OF BEAULIEU inquired whether the noble Earl could tell him in the case of cadet corps which were not connected with schools if the provision in Subsection (2) (f) of Clause 2 would apply. He knew that in Harrow, for instance, such corps would not be affected, because they did not receive public grants, but he was thinking of a cadet corps such as he had in his own battalion—a cadet corps not necessarily in a school, but in a town, and consisting of boys of about sixteen. Were such corps affected by this provision, or would they get a grant?

*LORD HARRIS desired to say a few words by way of warning to His Majesty's Government. He did not think what had already been said with regard to the amount of correspondence which would take place between the Army Council and the County Associations had anything like exhausted that interesting subject. There would be an entirely new subject for correspondence, viz., what the colonels spent in clothing and administration. At present it was, he imagined, the one outlay of the War Office in which red tape did not come in. The sum was handed over, whatever it might be, to an officer commanding a unit, and he spent it within the lines which had been laid down in the regulations. Those lines were very liberal, and the commanding officer was allowed to dispose of the money with great freedom. All that was to be done away with. He did not blame the War Office in the least for taking this liability off the shoulders of commanding officers, because he was perfectly aware that commanding officers had constantly grumbled at it. But that was all going to be done away with, and upon every item of expenditure that the officer commanding a unit wished to undertake there would be correspondence with the County Association. They all knew the trite example of how much was spent—he thought it was something like 7s. 6d.—in correspondence on the sewing of a button on to the tunic of a soldier. It was constantly quoted, he remembered, some years ago. That was an instance of red tape, and it seemed to him extremely probable that the same kind of thing was going to happen here, and that he, for instance, would not be able to get a trooper's overall altered by the local tailor without having a correspondence with the County Association. Upon every item included under the heads which had been mentioned by the noble Earl—expenditure on clothing, expenditure on drill halls, expenditure on rifle ranges, and so on—there would be correspondence of a more or less voluminous character. That had all got to be added to the correspondence which his noble friend on the Front Bench had referred to. He only mentioned this to show the noble Earl that it was an amount of correspondence which the War Office at present had no means of calculating, because at present it was done entirely by commanding officers of units, who very often paid for the correspondence out of their own pockets, and the volume of it was known only to themselves, and not to any War Office officials. All that was outside the means of calculation of the War Office at the present time, and therefore he threw this out as a warning to the noble Earl as a matter which he had to take into consideration, and ventured to think that he might find the expense of the County Associations in clerical matters, both as to *personnel* and also as to pens, ink and paper, a good deal more than he at present imagined.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause 3 agreed to.

Clause 4:—

LORD LOVAT moved an Amendment to Subsection (*e*), specifying that in regard to the regulations made by the Army Council under this part of the Act for providing by the constitution of joint committees or otherwise for co-operative action, such co-operative action should be "in the organisation and administration of divisions, brigades, and other military bodies." He thought that after the discussion they had had, they would probably all agree that the fewer of these County Associations there were the better, and that if the formation of County Associations could be avoided, it would be avoided in a good many cases. He therefore urged His Majesty's Government to accept his Amendment.

Amendment moved—

"On page 5, line 39, after the word 'action' to insert 'in the organisation and administration of divisions, brigades, and other military bodies.'"—(*Lord Lovat.*)

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said he should be very glad to accept the Amendment.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

VISCOUNT ESHER asked whether Subsection (*c*) was really required by His Majesty's Government. He had always understood that one of the great scandals, he might almost say, of the administration of the Volunteers hitherto had been the power vested in commanding officers both to borrow money on their own personal liability and also to mortgage the future grants. He thought it would be a matter of regret if these local associations were to start with similar powers, and he would ask the noble Lord whether that sub-section was really necessary.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH thought that the subsection had better not be dispensed with, because if there was to be a question of mortgaging future grants, it would have to be considered in connection with the regulations which the Government proposed to make under this paragraph. Under the circumstances he thought it better to leave the subsection in.

On Question, Clause 4, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 5:—

LORD LOVAT moved an Amendment to ensure that the number of men provided for by Parliament in the Territorial Forces at the passing of the Act should be not less than the number of men actually in the Auxiliary Forces prior to the passing of the Bill. He said he brought the Amendment forward not with any view of pressing it, but to extract certain information from His Majesty's Government as to what our Home defence would be after the passing of the Bill. At the present moment there were in the Auxiliary Forces—at all events on paper—500,000 men. In other words, that was the establishment. As a matter of fact, all the men available for the defence of the country were some 336,000. Under the new Act there would be as the establishment 300,000, or, to be more correct, perhaps 313,000 men. If they took the proportion of men to establishment in the existing Auxiliary Forces—that was to say, three-fourths, or 336,000 to 470,000—and three-fourths of the expected establishment, namely, three-fourths of 313,000, they would find that they would have something between 220,000 and 230,000 responsible for the defence of the country. That defence might be roughly divided under two heads, those men who had to take up the local defences, coast defence, and the defence of those places which must be held and in which men were placed at the beginning of a war and must remain until the war was over. He did not pretend to know, and if he did he certainly should not state, what that number was, but it was generally reckoned by military writers, including German writers, to be something between 115,000 and 200,000. Taking the mean of those two figures it meant that under existing circumstances there were at the present moment something in the neighbourhood of 180,000 men for our defences, while under the new scheme for the mobile force for the defence of this country we should have no more than 50,000 to 70,000 at the outside. He would ask their Lordships whether that was enough to reckon on for Home defence. He was not now going to enter into the possibilities of invasion or what landings could be effected. He knew the noble Lord opposite held some strictly confined views on the subject, but he would like to ask if he were correct in his view that the outside limit for mobile Home defence was something between 50,000 and 70,000, granting that the proportion of establishment to numbers which held good in the past would presumably hold good in the future. He thought they must accept as an absolute certainty that with any army on a voluntary principle they could never get absolutely up to establishment. The noble Earl did not perhaps quite believe that, but he could tell him as one running a couple of Yeomanry regiments that it was perfectly impossible from one day to the next to be absolutely certain of what their strength was. Men came and went. They had the right, of course, of leaving at short notice, and they did not notify the fact until the last moment before the training that they intended to leave, and the commanding officer did not hear probably that they had gone to Canada until they had been there a month. There was never any hope of an army recruited on a voluntary basis being kept up to establishment. They must allow for at least 10 per cent., and moreover, there was the certainty that, in the division of units in a way they thought rather arbitrary, where they got a full unit and more than enough recruits in one place, in another place they did not get half up to strength. That had always been the past experience, and presumably it would remain so. He would not enter into the question of efficiency, although it might be pressed, but that there would be certainly something in the same nature as at present he thought practically admitted of no doubt. He would ask the noble Earl whether, say, 150,000 to 200,000 for local or strong place defences taken off the 313,000, which was to be the total number for Home defence, was sufficient for the defences of this country? He was perfectly well aware that he could be met in part by the argument that in one case he was counting the Militia and in the other he was not. But they could not have their cake and eat it. The Government claimed to make a better defence for abroad than before, and therefore, they could not count these men among those for the defence of the Home country. He thought when they came to consider that they had taken off regular battalions in the past, that they had reduced the number of Artillery, that they were going to knock off twenty-three regiments of Militia, and, so far as he could see, sixty-one battalions of Volunteers, and although concessions had been made to the Yeomanry, they were going to reduce their numbers also, and when in addition they realised the importance of the questions asked on the subject of the Navy by Lord Cawdor the other day, he thought the question of the defence of this country was one to which insufficient attention had been given. He would like to ask the noble Earl—and he hoped he would at least answer this particular question—whether he considered the small mobile force, distinct from the number required for local defences, for the whole of England, Ireland, and Scotland, was sufficient to meet the requirements which might be put upon it.

Amendment moved—

"In page 6, line 27, after the word 'Parliament' to insert the words 'Provided always that the number of men provided for by Parliament in the Territorial Forces at the passing of the Act shall be not less than the number of men actually in the Auxiliary Forces prior to the passing of such Act.'"—(*Lord Lovat.*)

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said he did not want to appear to be discourteous to his noble friend, but it was quite impossible for him casually to discuss across the Table the question of the number of men which, in his opinion, were or were not necessary in regard to the very complex subject of Home defence. That was a question which if it was to be decided could only be decided after consultation with and on the advice of the Committee of Imperial Defence, and he could only on this occasion ask their Lordships to consider the actual effect of the Amendment which the noble Lord had moved. The effect of that Amendment, which he hoped his noble friend would not press upon the House, would be to put a minimum limit to the number of men to be voted by Parliament for the Territorial Forces. The actual numbers of the Regular Forces and Militia were at present annually fixed by Parliament, and the old constitutional reason and practice were to prevent the Crown exceeding that number. In the case of the Yeomanry and Volunteers, whose services were regarded as purely voluntary, there never had been any limit fixed to their numbers, and the money voted had the practical effect of restricting the number to be raised. The only result of the Amendment would be to prevent any reduction in the numbers of the Territorial Forces below the actual numbers of the Volunteers and Yeomanry. According to the figures which he had the numbers at the present moment stood at 280,000. Even if this Amendment were carried it would not have the effect of binding Parliament, because Parliament could override it next year by the Appropriation Act or any other Act by which the numbers of the Territorial Force were fixed. It was quite impossible for the Government to accept this Amendment, which moreover would not have the effect which it apparently was intended to have.

LORD LOVAT: What will be the number of the mobile force for the defence of the country?

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: I am not in a position to give a categorical answer to that question.

LORD LOVAT said that that was information which their Lordships ought to press for, because it was one of the most important subjects touched by the Bill. They must presume that His Majesty's Government were going to give the country for home defence a sufficient number of men not only to defend the strong places and the coast, but also to give a residue for mobile columns in the country, and he ventured to state that the outside limit of numbers they could expect was not more than from 50,000 to 70,000.

THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE said he would like to draw attention to the position in which they found themselves. The Under-Secretary's attitude evidently was that he was unwilling to put in the Bill a provision which attempted to bind future Parliaments with reference to this matter.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said the object of the Amendment, if carried, would be to fix the minimum number of men. They could not do that by a provision in this Bill. It would practically be overridden to-morrow by the Appropriation Act.

Lord MONTAGU of BEAULIEU asked if the noble Earl would give the information asked for by Lord Lovat.

*The Earl of PORTSMOUTH said it was not in his power.

Lord MONTAGU of BEAULIEU said that perhaps on Third Reading the noble Earl would be able to tell their Lordships what number would be available for the defence of this country.

*The Earl of PORTSMOUTH said it was quite impossible for him to give any undertaking of that kind.

Lord LOVAT asked leave to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause 5 agreed to.

Clause 6 :—

Lord MONTAGU of BEAULIEU moved an Amendment providing that an order might be issued with respect to the government, discipline, pay, "and allowances" of the Territorial Force. He said he did not think the House had had any statement as to pay and allowances to be given to the force, and perhaps the noble Earl could tell them whether they would be the same as they had been accustomed to. He understood that in future there was to be eight days training for the Territorial Army, and he took it the Government wished to give the same pay and allowances as had been given hitherto. He really put down the Amendment to elicit that from the noble Earl, and to ask whether there would be any change in camp allowance, rates in lieu of pay, and other details.

Amendment moved—

"In page 6, line 32, after the word 'pay,' to insert the words 'and allowances.'"—(*Lord Montagu of Beaulieu*).

The Earl of PORTSMOUTH said he was quite prepared to accept the Amendment.

Lord MONTAGU of BEAULIEU: Can the noble Earl give any informtion ?

The Earl of PORTSMOUTH: I cannot give you details.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Lord MONTAGU of BEAULIEU moved an Amendment providing that the orders issued might provide, among other things, "for the appointment of a Regular adjutant" and for the constitution of a permanent staff, "including adjutants and staff-sergeants, who shall be members of His Majesty's Regular Forces." He said that this was rather an important Amendment. The noble Earl, he believed, could reassure those who believed in the future of the Territorial Army on this point, which was that this force should be allowed to have Regular adjutants and staff-sergeants as at present. There was, he thought, an idea at one time that they should be called upon to provide their own adjutants, which in some cases might work well, but he believed Mr. Haldane had stated that the adjutants would be selected as at present, and if the noble Earl could give him an assurance it would meet the object of the Amendment.

Amendment moved—

"In page 7, line 5, after the word 'provide' to insert the words 'for the appointment of a regular adjutant and.'"—(*Lord Montagu of Beaulieu.*)

*The Earl of PORTSMOUTH said that he could not accept this Amendment or the next.† He would take both Amendments together, as they applied to the same question, and the same objection applied to both. The Government were not in a position to accept the Amendments because they dealt with matters in regard to which they could not tie their hands by Act of Parliament. To attempt to do so might, and probably would, dislocate all the training arrangements. The Army Council had no present intention to dispense with the Regular adjutants, but they could not tie their hands in the way suggested by the Amendment. Very possibly in the future it might be that the employment of members of the trained staff of the third and fourth battalions and instructors of the Territorial Forces would enable the Army Council to dispense to some extent with the services of the adjutants and staff-sergeants.

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† The Amendment referred to proposed that the orders issued under Clause 6 might provide for the constitution of a permanent staff, "including adjutants and staff sergeants who shall be members of His Majesty's Regular Forces."

*VISCOUNT MIDLETON did not think the noble Earl had quite appreciated the force of the clause. The clause was only permissive, but it gave a sort of *rechauffé* of what the intentions of the Government were. The noble Earl would recall that in the other House of Parliament the Secretary of State gave an undertaking to provide Regular adjutants to these corps, and, in order merely to carry out the actual proposal in the Paper which had been laid on the Table by the right hon. Gentleman in the other House, it was highly desirable to bring this clause into concurrence with the provision for a permanent staff and also for the appointment of Regular adjutants By the use of the word "may" it was still left in the power of the Government to advise His Majesty whether it should or should not be done, and he thought under the circumstances, seeing that the matter had been made the subject already of a Parliamentary statement which was practically a Parliamentary pledge, the noble Earl would only be showing a want of confidence in what had already been done if he refused to allow it to be placed in the Bill.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: With regard to the second Amendment, is not the force of the permissive word "may" somewhat diminished by the phrase "adjutants and staff-sergeants who shall be members of His Majesty's Regular forces?" It seems to me that if those words are included it may be taken to be very much like a permanent injunction to make them always members of the Regular forces.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said it was quite true that the object was to give the opportunity to the Army Council to appoint these Regular adjutants and for Parliament to indicate to the country that that was what was contemplated. As his noble friend had just pointed out, there was no desire absolutely to bind the Army Council, as the word "may" and not "shall" was used; but he was convinced that if the Government persisted in refusing this Amendment it would be conceived in the country that they had gone back upon the position which they took up recently in the House of Commons. It would be thought that after the country had been informed that the adjutancies were to be properly maintained the Government had, on second thoughts, come to the conclusion that perhaps they ought not to be maintained. Did the Government desire to produce that impression in the country? It would be a most disastrous impression, because he was perfectly certain, though he was not himself a Volunteer, from his knowledge of the subject that it would be quite impossible to carry on the Volunteer service properly unless it had these adjutants. The noble Earl had said that perhaps in the future it might be found possible to detach an officer from the staff of the Militia to take over the duties of adjutant of the Volunteer force. He could not congratulate the noble Earl upon that suggestion. He thought it would be very inconvenient for the special Reservists, and exceedingly unpopular with the Territorial Force. But he need not argue the point, because it came within the terms of the Amendment that the adjutant would be a Regular officer within the meaning of the Amendment. He had invited the Government not to expose themselves to the undoubted suspicion which would be created by their action if they refused this Amendment. It would be thought throughout the country that the idea of maintaining the Regular adjutants in the Territorial Force had been abandoned. He was afraid they could not be parties to such a change of front, if it was to be made.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said he really did not think the noble Marquess had any justification for supposing they would make a change of front, but he could not accept this Amendment without further consultation. He was advised that it would have a different effect from what the noble Lord supposed. If, however, he found that it could be inserted at a later stage, he would insert it. At the present moment, however, he could not accept it.

LORD MONTAGU OF BEAULIEU said in this case they felt very strongly indeed that the Territorial Army, which they would all try loyally to make a success, would not be a success unless they had Regular adjutants and staff-sergeants. He had had an acting-adjutant for some time who was an exceptionally good Volunteer, and if he was not to have a Regular adjutant for his corps he would rather have a Volunteer whom he could select from among his own staff; but he appealed for a Regular adjutant, because they wanted that professional assistance from the Regular adjutant which he thought they ought to have.

VISCOUNT MIDLETON hoped the Amendment would be pressed to a division. At the War Office, where he had a good deal of experience in this matter, he was advised over and over again by the Commander-in Chief that it was absolutely necessary that the Volunteers should have a Regular adjutant. The Government had admitted that plea by giving a Parliamentary pledge, and it would be most unfortunate if the noble Earl should appear in any way to go back upon it.

*EARL ROBERTS supported what the noble Viscount had said. As Commander-in-Chief he had always insisted that the adjutant of the Volunteers should be a Regular, and as it had been said in the House of Commons that he should be a Regular he could not conceive that there was any objection to inserting the Amendment. He trusted the Amendment would be carried.

*LORD HAVERSHAM said he believed that an adjutant was included in the permanent staff, and this clause gave the power to appoint a permanent staff.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: What is the objection to the Amendment?

The Earl of Portsmouth.

*LORD HAVERSHAM said they never put into an administrative Bill like this actual details of what was to be done by the executive officers at the War Office. It was most unusual to tie their hands in the way proposed by the Amendment, and a particular objection was that it would cut out all the Militia officers, for whom they had been endeavouring for years in the House of Commons to obtain these adjutancies. He could instance in the case of the London Rifle Brigade—practically the best man they ever had as adjutant would have been cut out by this Amendment because he had sold his commission in the Army. Their Lordships had the pledge of the Secretary of State for War and the assurance of his noble friend that what Lord Roberts said would be regarded, and that these adjutants and staff-sergeants from the Army would be preserved as far as possible; but he thought it would be very unfair to tie the hands of the Government by special words in the Bill, and it was certainly quite foreign to the practice of Parliament to include such details in a Bill of this kind, which was of an administrative and not of an executive character.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: If the noble Lord supposes the words are merely surplusage they will do no great harm.

*LORD HAVERSHAM: But they tie the hands of the Government.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I think the clause should contain an indication that in ordinary cases Regular adjutants will be appointed. Let me point out that the whole clause is governed by the word "may"; therefore, it does not put any compulsion upon the military authorities to make these appointments. It is merely an indication that as a rule it is desirable.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: Neither the noble Marquess nor any other noble Lord has touched the point which I ventured to raise, namely, that if you insert the word "may" in the earlier part of the clause it seems very singular drafting to use the word "shall" in the latter part. As regards the whole question, my noble friend has said that he will ask the Secretary of State what his view is as to including some words of this nature at a later stage. I think it is hardly possible to expect my noble friend to go further than this, and under these circumstances I desire to appeal to your Lordships not to divide the House.

THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE said he was sure their Lordships were very glad to hear that the Secretary for War would consider these words at a later stage, but he thought they had a right to say that they should have been considered before, and if that had not been done, surely the proper course was to insert the words now and consider them afterwards.

*THE EARL OF CREWE : Considered in the light of the noble Earl's objections.

THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE : The objections have all been raised by that bench, and surely you have considered them by now.

THE EARL OF ARRAN thought that Regular adjutants should be employed, but his view as commanding a battalion, like his noble friend Lord Montagu, was that if they could not have Regular adjutants they would prefer to have them from their own staff.

LORD LUCAS said he quite saw the point of the noble Viscount and also of the noble Earl, Lord Roberts, who had pointed out the great importance that had hitherto been attached to the appointment of Regular adjutants for Volunteer regiments and the great good that had resulted. At the same time, there had been a great change in the policy to be inaugurated under the new Territorial Army and that was made possible by the new factor of training battalions. It was the intention of the Government, he believed, to try as far as possible a new system of training, which was that, instead of having the instructor attached to the unit, as was the case now, they should try as far as possible to give a very scientific and specialised training to the officers by means of the training machinery which was to be set up, and then allow them to develop their power of command by receiving instruction which would enable them to go back to their regiments and command their own men, not under the eye of a permanent man as in the case of the adjutant. He believed that in the view of the General Staff that was most likely to lead to efficiency. It seemed that in trying this new method of training they would render the whole thing nugatory if they insisted, as was done by this Amendment, upon the appointment to the unit of an adjutant who should be a Regular.

THE EARL OF ARRAN said he had had some small experience both as a junior officer in the Militia and as a commanding officer of Volunteers, and he knew that the deference which was shown to the opinion of a Regular adjutant was due to the fact that he was a Regular soldier and a man who knew. The man, however, who was only what they would call one of themselves would not have that influence, and he did not see how a man of sufficient energy to become a good adjutant would consent to take up a career which offered as little as that of an adjutancy of a Territorial unit. He thought that a Regular adjutant was absolutely essential to the well-being of the Auxiliary Forces.

LORD MONTAGU OF BEAULIEU suggested that the Government might meet him in this matter. His second Amendment covered the point he wished to raise, and so with the permission of the House he would drop the first. As regarded the second Amendment, if between now and the Report Stage better grammar could be made of the clause by inserting "shall" in a different place he would be prepared to accept it. But they did want to emphasise their desire that the adjutant should be a man who would keep the Auxiliary Force in touch with the latest practice of the Regular Army. That was the object he had in view, and if the Government could give an assurance on that point he would be perfectly willing to leave the matter to the Report Stage. But unless he had the assurance in definite and precise terms he must press the Amendment.

Amendment by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment moved—

"In page 7, line 6, after the word 'staff' to insert the words 'including adjutants and staff sergeants who shall be members of His Majesty's regular forces.'"—(*Lord Montagu of Beaulieu.*)

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said he was afraid the noble Lord must press his Amendment as the Government could give no assurance such as he asked for.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 6, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 7 agreed to.

Clause 8:—

LORD MONTAGU OF BEAULIEU moved an Amendment to substitute three years for the four years which the clause provided as the maximum term of enlistment under this part of the Bill. He said he had put down the Amendment with the object of asking the noble Earl what his views were on the question of enlistment. At the present moment the Bill read as follows—

"Shall be enlisted to serve for such a period as may be prescribed, not exceeding four years, reckoned from the date of his attestation."

The practice in most of the Volunteer regiments now was to enlist for three years. He did not raise any serious objection to four years if it would produce the same number of men, but he was rather afraid that four years was too long a period, and that it would make for the success of the new Territorial Army if three instead of four years was inserted. There were many men among the working classes who shifted from place to place, and it seemed that four years was too long a period to tie themselves up for.

Amendment moved—

"In page 8, line 37, to leave out the word 'four' and insert the word 'three"—(*Lord Montagu of Beaulieu.*)

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH did not think there was very much in the proposal of his noble friend. The effect of his Amendment would be to substitute three years for four years as the maximum term for which a man should be enlisted in the Territorial Force, and he rather gathered that his noble friend supported the Amendment, having reference to the fact that three years was the term for which the Yeomanry and Volunteers were enlisted.

LORD MONTAGU OF BEAULIEU: The usual period.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said that if it were found by experience that three years was the more convenient period it could be adopted in the Bill as it now stood. Four years was merely a maximum. The military authorities were desirous of having power if they found it desirable to enlist men for four years, and that term was considered by some to be rather more convenient. He hoped under the circumstances the Amendment would not be pressed.

LORD MONTAGU OF BEAULIEU said that after the noble Earl's explanation he was quite willing to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

*THE DUKE OF BEDFORD asked whether the terms of enlistment for the Territorial soldier would enable the Territorial Force to be used in aid of the civil power.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said the Territorial soldier could not be called out in aid of the civil power, but, of course, as an individual he might be called upon in exactly the same way as any ordinary citizen.

*THE DUKE OF BEDFORD asked whether the form of foreign service for the Territorial Force would be similar to that for the Militia. Would they be asked, in circumstances where refusal was almost impossible, to volunteer for foreign service?

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: The members of the Territorial Force may volunteer for foreign service just as the present Militia, and Section 12 of the present Bill is based on the corresponding section of the existing Militia Act.

Lord RAGLAN: Will it be made quite clear to the men, when they enlist, that they will be asked to volunteer in case of emergency for foreign service?

*The Earl of PORTSMOUTH: Yes; it will be made quite clear that they may, if they wish, volunteer for foreign service.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 9:—

The Duke of NORTHUMBERLAND said that the deputy-lieutenant, who appeared nowhere else in the Bill, suddenly presented himself in Subsection (2) of this clause and had the duty placed upon him of attesting a recruit. Might he ask if that was the only duty left to the deputy-lieutenants? If that was all they were to be called upon to perform it seemed hardly worth while keeping them in existence, and the Government might consider the position of the class altogether.

The Earl of PORTSMOUTH said he did not exactly know at the moment what the duties of deputy-lieutenants were, although he was one himself. He only knew that he got a uniform early in life. As regarded the future, it was intended that deputy-lieutenancies should be conferred on those who rendered some service in these associations.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 10:—

Lord MONTAGU of BEAULIEU asked what would happen in the case of a man in the Territorial Army who was insubordinate, say in a drill hall. Would he then come under the military law, and had the commanding officer or the officer on parade power to punish him?

*The Earl of PORTSMOUTH asked the noble Lord if he would communicate with him privately on the point, as he did not like to answer off-hand.

Lord MONTAGU of BEAULIEU asked whether the men of the Territorial Army were to be under military law on every occasion when they were wearing uniform.

*The Earl of PORTSMOUTH said he really could not give his noble friend an answer to the question there and then.

Lord MONTAGU of BEAULIEU hoped the noble Earl would look up the point and be good enough to inform the House either on the Report stage or Third Reading.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 11 agreed to.

Clause 12:—

Lord RAGLAN moved an Amendment providing that the Territorial Force shall be liable for service in "the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man" as well as in the United Kingdom. He said it seemed to him a very great pity unnecessarily to tie the hands of the War Office and the country in the use they could make of the Territorial Army. After all, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man were comparatively close to these shores, and it would be a great mistake to treat men going to either the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man as going on foreign service. He did not know if the Joint Naval and Military Committee was in existence now, but if it was and the noble Earl presided over it, he would in all probability have heard a good deal about the Channel Islands. He thought perhaps it was not necessary for him to say more than that the defence of the Channel Islands, in the event of certain wars occurring, would have a most delicate and difficult task, and it would be an enormous advantage to the War Office if they had the power of despatching troops from the Territorial Forces to the Channel Islands, without going through the very long paraphernalia of asking the regiment if they would volunteer and so forth. After all, the Channel Islands were not so very far from these shores and were a place to which large numbers of our population were accustomed to go. With regard to the Isle of Man, although not strategically so important a place, still there was a difficulty as to which the noble Earl would perhaps enlighten him, if he did not wish to accept this Amendment. The difficulty was that, although the Bill applied to the Isle of Man, he did not see any power to mobilise any part of the Territorial Force in the Isle of Man. Supposing, therefore, some part of the Territorial Force was raised in the Isle of Man itself, it would be impossible to embody it for service there, although it could be embodied in Great Britain and Ireland. This Amendment would strengthen the hands of the War Office and inflict no harm on the forces.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 11, line 35, after the word 'Kingdom' to insert the words 'the Channel Isles and the Isle of Man.'"—(*Lord Raglan.*)

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said the Isle of Man was included under Clause 37 in the definition of the United Kingdom; therefore, whatever applied to the United Kingdom applied also to the Isle of Man. As regarded the Channel Islands, those islands already had their own Militia under their own special laws, allocated for the defence of the islands, and they had, therefore, been expressly excluded from the operation of the Bill.

Amendment, by leave withdrawn.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 13 agreed to.

Clause 14:—

LORD LOVAT moved to leave out "fifteen" and insert "eighteen" as the *maximum* number of days of annual training. He said the reason he pressed this Amendment was because the Yeomanry at the present time went out for sixteen days, and he was certain a very large number of the Yeomanry would not wish to see their training cut down even by a day. At present, especially in those corps in which it was difficult to get the men together for squadron training—the regulation being that certain squadron training had to be done before the regular annual training—it was customary to bring out the regiments for eighteen days in order to get in the squadron drills. It was a matter of convenience for the officers and men, and made for greater efficiency, and he would ask the Government if they could see their way to allow this Amendment. By Subsection (2) of the clause His Majesty in Council might at any time order the period of annual training to be shorter or longer, and he would press the Amendment because the clause gave the opportunity of making any change. If the Amendment were not carried it would undoubtedly result in the Yeomanry having fifteen days instead of sixteen or eighteen as at the present time, and a considerable loss of efficiency would be occasioned. While they of the Yeomanry wished to meet the Government's suggestions in every way, there was one point on which every Yeomanry meeting that he had attended had been strong upon, and that was the point of resisting every attack on their efficiency. He felt that to cut down the annual training would be a distinct blow at efficiency.

Amendment moved—

"In page 12, line 37, to leave out the word 'fifteen,' and insert the word 'eighteen.'"—(*Lord Lovat.*)

LORD MONTAGU OF BEAULIEU desired to raise the question of the future policy with regard to fifteen and eighteen days. The clause provided that the force should be trained for not less than eight or more than fifteen days in a year. Speaking for Volunteer corps he sincerely hoped the Government would be able to give them fifteen days training in the future, with which they would become, he thought, a very efficient and useful force. He thought the noble Earl would agree with him that nearly every inspecting officer in his confidential reports had recommended for several years past that fifteen days should be the minimum training for the Auxiliary Forces, and he hoped on that point the noble Earl would be able to extract from the Chancellor of the Exchequer a promise to allow, at any rate to the best of the forces, fifteen days training. It was the general wish among all commanding officers he knew that they should have fifteen days' training in future, and he hoped the money that was necessary might be found.

THE EARL OF LONSDALE hoped the Government would see their way to extend the period of training to eighteen days.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH was afraid that when the very large incursions into the public exchequer which had been already promised during the progress of the Bill were realised the relations of the War Office with the Treasury would be somewhat strained; but, subject to the Treasury, he was sure they at the War Office would always try to make the best conditions and get as much money as they could. With regard to the particular Amendment moved by Lord Lovat, all he wished to say in regard to the matter was that fifteen days were fixed in the Bill after a good deal of consideration and after consultation with the General Staff, who hoped that, under the new system of training, they would be able to render the troops far more efficient in fifteen days than was possible under the present system. He hoped, therefore, the Amendment would not be pressed.

*LORD HARRIS did not think the noble Earl quite understood the proposition. At present the arrangement was for sixteen days and the men went up for squadron drills on the two days previous. They did not draw full pay for those two days, but only half pay, which was given whether they went to the place of training for these squadron drills or whether they performed them at home. No extra expense was put upon the Government by the arrangement. It was a great convenience to have all the men at one place, because there was a full number for each squadron drill. When the squadron drill was done at home the probability was that they did not put in nearly so many men as at the place of training. It was no expense to the Government, and, after all, it was only permissive, and he could not see that it could do any harm at any rate to consider it carefully.

*THE EARL OF SCARBROUGH suggested as a possible compromise that they might insert after "fifteen days," "or, in the case of the mounted branch, eighteen days." This was a point they felt strongly about for three reasons. First, the mounted branch had double as much to learn as the Infantry branch of the Territorial Army, and, therefore, it was necessary that the former should have as much time at the annual training as possible; secondly, it was hoped in future that they might be able to take more part than they had in the past in combined training, and if they had only eight or fourteen days' training it was unlikely that they could take part with any usefulness in combined training. They must have at least a week or eight days' preliminary training, and that left little time afterwards for manœuvres. Then on the point of discipline, it was of immense advantage to have as much training as possible. In his small experience he had discovered that since the length of annual training had been doubled the discipline of the Yeomanry had increased greatly, and that, he thought, was a point of great value.

THE EARL OF LONSDALE said the noble Earl had referred to the "new system of training." Would he kindly explain what the new system of training was? He knew nothing about it and had never heard of it.

*LORD HAVERSHAM said that Section 3 of this clause met the objections of Lord Harris and Lord Scarbrough.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said he ought perhaps to have stated that a committee at the War Office with the General Staff were considering the whole question of training. He thought, however, he might accept the compromise suggested by Lord Scarbrough in the case of Yeomanry, making the maximum eighteen days instead of fifteen days.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment moved—

"In page 12, line 37, after the word 'days,' to insert the words 'or, in the case of the mounted branch, eighteen days.'"—(*Lord Scarbrough.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

On the Question that the clause, as amended, stand part of the Bill—

Lord MONTAGU of BEAULIEU asked who the prescribed general officer referred to in the clause would be. Was he the person whom the noble Earl designated in his statement on going into Committee, when he said the prescribed general officer was the officer who was to be prescribed? That did not take them much further. Would he be the general officer commanding the district?

***Lord HARRIS** asked for an explanation as to why the general officer was given power to do away with the training altogether or reduce it. Was that a matter of convenience because all the provisions as regarded training required an authority superior to that of the general officer? Now he was to be suddenly given the power of doing away with the training altogether. He was sorry to say his experience of general officers was that they were not always very clear as regarded the duties of the Auxiliary Forces. One, he remembered, ordered him to find mobilisation equipment when he had no power to order anything of the kind, and in the course of voluminous correspondence he proved to the general officer that it was not the case. Another ordered him not to manœuvre over land or fire blank ammunition without the permission of every landowner in the neighbourhood. That was obviously a ridiculous order, and, if carried out, would have made it impossible for any troops, Regular or Auxiliary, to do any manœuvres in any part of the country. He took the liberty of asking whether this was an order of the Army Council, but his request was never answered until this year, when an officer came down and asked him what arrangements he had made for a night attack. He explained what he had done, but added that, of course, he could not cross any lands or fire any blank ammunition. The officer asked the reason, and he informed him of the general officer's instructions. He (Lord Harris) afterwards heard that the order had not been sufficiently considered, and that the officer who gave it had left the Army. He wanted to know whether there would be any appeal from the prescribed officer to the Army Council under this Bill, and, if not, whether there might be no training at all if the prescribed officer so took it into his head.

***Lord LUCAS** thought with regard to the prescribed general officer dispensing with the drill of any unit, that practically it would only be the general officer commanding-in-chief in the district, who was, of course, responsible to the Army Council for the efficiency of the troops of the Territorial Force under him. Therefore it would only be under very exceptional circumstances that he would dispense with the training of a regiment, and, of course, being accountable to the Army Council for its efficiency, he would have to satisfy them that the reasons for dispensing with the training were adequate or he would be held responsible by the Army Council. The answer to Lord Montagu, who asked why in this clause the commanding officer was allowed to absolve a man from training, whereas later on the term used was "the prescribed officer," was, he thought, found in the fact, that as a rule the prescribed officer would be the commanding officer. It was, however, impossible to tie themselves absolutely to the words "commanding officer," because occasions might arise under certain circumstances where it would be more useful for an officer who was not the commanding officer to make himself responsible. For instance, in the case of an outlying company where the commanding officer had not an intimate knowledge of the facts, it might prove useful to let the company commander deal with any case that arose.

Lord MONTAGU of BEAULIEU: Then I gather the word "prescribed" means prescribed by the Army Council?

***Lord LUCAS**: Yes.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 15:—

Amendment moved—

"In page 13, line 27, to leave out the word 'thirty' and insert the word "forty.'"—*Viscount Midleton.*)

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: I accept this.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Consequental Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 16 to 20 agreed to.

Clause 21:—

LORD MONTAGU OF BEAULIEU moved an Amendment providing that the value of public property wrongfully sold or destroyed by a member of the Territorial Force shall be recoverable by the County Association "at the request of the officer commanding the unit to which the person belongs." He said that perhaps the noble Earl could give their Lordships some information as to the machinery by which money might be recovered from a man who injured his arms, destroyed his clothing, or behaved in such a way as to make himself liable in some amount to the County Association. He had only put his Amendment down with the object of eliciting information, as it was highly undesirable that any doubt should exist regarding these and other matters of machinery. He took it that the meaning of the clause was that on the representation of the commanding officer of the particular unit the County Association would proceed against a man who had made himself liable in some way or other; that they would sue him in a Court and would recover the amount for which he was liable and that the money, if any was recovered, would be paid into the Exchequer or the County Association.

Amendment moved—

"In page 16, line 19, after the word 'association' to insert the words 'at the request of the officer commanding the unit to which the person belongs.'"—(*Lord Montagu of Beaulieu.*)

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said he did not think the Amendment was one that his noble friend would wish to press to a division after an explanation had been given of what its effect would be. His noble friend proposed to insert after "association" the words "at the request of the officer commanding the unit to which the person belongs." The effect of the Amendment would be that the association would be prevented from suing a man of the Territorial Force who had damaged his arms or accoutrements unless it was requested to do so by the commanding officer. The Government did not think that was a discretion which it was either reasonable or fair to place on the commanding officer. The association was responsible to the Army Council for all property which was bought or secured out of the public funds, and therefore the association was the proper authority to decide when and how steps ought to be taken in the event of wrongful disposal of such property. One of the main objects of the Bill was to relieve the officer commanding from all administrative responsibility of this kind, and he thought his noble friend would probably be satisfied with this explanation.

LORD MONTAGU OF BEAULIEU said that at the present moment in case of default on the part of a man, as, for instance, if he did not make himself efficient, the commanding officer would sue the man in court and recover the amount of the capitation grant. Was he to understand that in future the commanding officer was to have nothing to do with informing the County Association, and that that body was to act entirely on its own initiative? He wanted to know how the machinery would work, as it was important that there should be no doubt with regard to matters of this kind as to the course that would be followed. Supposing a man failed to make himself efficient and did not obtain the grant, would the commanding officer tell the County Association or would he leave the County Association to find out the fact itself? This was a rather important point, because commanding officers might be put in a difficulty. They would want to recover the amount of the capitation grant from a man, and it seemed to him that they would have to do it in future through the County Association.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: I think that this does not come under the clause. The question under discussion relates to suing for the recovery of property and not in respect of inefficiency.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 22:—

LORD MONTAGU OF BEAULIEU moved an Amendment "providing that an officer or man of the Territorial Force should not be compelled to serve as a peace officer or parish officer, and should be exempt from serving on any jury and from serving in the office of High Sheriff." He did not think that the Government would have any very serious objection to this Amendment, at any rate so far as the War Office was concerned, although certainly the Home Office might object to it. He would point out that it was a great hardship on a commanding officer of a battalion, who was necessarily put to some expense, and had to devote a good deal of time to the duties of his position, to be called upon to serve, perhaps not in the same county as his command, in the office of high sheriff. He was prepared in order to meet all contingencies to insert in his Amendment the words, "if he should so desire" so that it would be made quite clear that it was optional in a commanding officer whether he served as high sheriff or not. He made that offer because he believed there were people to be found who were so patriotic that they were willing to fill the position of commanding officer and at the same time to act as high sheriff, although he was bound to say that he pitied them. There were, however, a great number of officers who might be called upon to fill the office of high sheriff and who would desire to be free from those onerous duties. They would like in fact to have the same advantage as they did in the matter of exemption from jury service.

Amendment moved—

"In page 17, line 8, after the word 'jury' to insert the words 'and from serving in the office of high sheriff.'"—(*Lord Montagu of Beaulieu.*)

*THE EARL OF CREWE: I am sure everybody must sympathise with the object of the noble Lord. He desires, as I gather, that people who undertake one form of public service, should be relieved from another. I have no doubt he has also in his mind the possibility that the prospect of escaping the somewhat onerous duties of high sheriff might be an inducement to gentleman to join the Volunteer Force. I am able to speak on this subject with some experience, because the ultimate selection of the high sheriffs rests partly with the Exchequer and partly with my Department. I do not think it would be quite safe to go outside the present rule in this matter. The present law is that all commissioned officers of the Regular Army on the active list are exempt from serving as high sheriffs, and it seems to be reasonable, now that the Militia practically becomes part of the Regular Army, that Militia officers should have the same privilege. Whether under the law as it stands, the words "officers of the Regular Army on the active list" would include Militia officers, seems to be doubtful, and therefore we should propose to bring up at a later stage of the Bill words that will make it perfectly clear that officers of the Militia are included. Now, as regards the Volunteers, and, of course, the Yeomanry, no specific exemption is granted to the officers. But when they are called out for training as reserves, they are subject to military law, and therefore any officer of the reserve, during his period of training, cannot serve as high sheriff. That is provided for, and therefore all officers of the Territorial Force, during embodiment, must be discharged from personally performing the duties of high sheriff.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND: Which clause is that under?

*THE EARL OF CREWE: Subsection (3) of this clause. It is provided there that if a high sheriff is an officer of the Territorial Force, then during embodiment, he shall be discharged from personally performing the office of high sheriff. As noble Lords are aware, those who have to serve in the office of high sheriff very often ask to be excused from doing so, and a great variety of excuses are urged. I think it stands to reason that in the case of any officer in the position explained by the noble Lord, that is, being in command of a battalion and having heavy duties to perform, his military duties would be taken as an adequate excuse for his not filling the office of high sheriff. It would, I think, probably be a reason for his being put back on the list and not being called upon to serve as high sheriff until his term of military duty had come to an end. I should much have liked to go the whole way with the noble Lord, but as a matter of fact there are some counties in which it is by no means easy to find gentlemen to take this onerous office, and if the mere fact of having a commission in the Yeomanry or the Volunteers was to be taken as a legal or a regular excuse I am afraid the difficulty might be added to, though, looking at the other side of the question, I can quite believe that it might possibly be of benefit in swelling the ranks of Volunteer officers.

LORD MONTAGU OF BEAULIEU said that after what the noble Earl had said he did not think that he could press his Amendment. He hoped, however, that it might be regarded as an understanding that the noble Earl's Department, in conjunction with the Exchequer, would in future consider favourably the case of men commanding battalions in connection with exemptions from the office of high sheriff.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause agreed to.

Clauses 23 to 27 agreed to.

Clause 28 :—

Amendment moved—

"In page 20, line 4, to leave out the word 'Militia.'"—(*The Earl of Portsmouth.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

*VISCOUNT MIDLETON said he did not know whether the noble Earl had noticed that he had amended the Amendment he now proposed. He thought perhaps the noble Earl would now see no objection to it. On the previous night the point turned on the question of the pay, but that was not now included in the Amendment, which merely provided that the Order in Council should specify any changes in the *status* and conditions of service which it was natural should be stated in Orders in Council.

Amendment moved—

"In page 20, line 10, after the word 'accordingly' to insert the words 'provided that the said Order in Council shall specify any change in the conditions of service of the Yeomanry or Volunteer force, and that any further change shall be similarly notified by Order in Council.'"—(*Viscount Midleton.*)

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said he was afraid he would have some difficulty in taking the Amendment in the form in which it was moved. Its effect would be to make it necessary not only to specify in an Order in Council all the changes effected by the transfer of the Yeomanry and the Volunteers to the Territorial Force, but all subsequent changes in the conditions of service of that force. As regarded the first part of the Amendment, it would be extremely difficult to specify in an Order in Council all the changes in the conditions of service of the Yeomanry and the Volunteers. As regarded the second part, in the case of future changes, all the regulations to be effected by ordinary Army Orders under Clause 6 concerning the conditions of service of the force would have to be effected by Order in Council. That would be very cumbrous. Clause 6, Sub-section (7), already provided that all orders and regulations made under it should be laid on the Table of both Houses of Parliament, and that provision would appear to be ample as regarded informing Parliament. The proposal to carry out the ordinary regulations under Orders in Council seemed unworkable, and therefore it was not because he differed from his noble friend on any question of principle, but because it was thought that his proposal would be almost impossible to work in practice, that he was unable to accept the Amendment.

*VISCOUNT MIDLETON thought that there was no objection to the first part of the Amendment, "Provided that the said Order in Council shall specify any change in the conditions of service of the Yeomanry or Volunteer Force." If he stopped there, and the noble Earl would accept it, he would ask their Lordships to allow him to withdraw the last part of the Amendment.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: I confess I do not understand exactly what it is the noble Viscount wishes to have included in the Order in Council. Does he mean that the actual effect of the changes on each battalion and regiment is to be printed in the *Gazette* in an Order in Council? If he merely means the general terms of the conditions of service I should conceive that that might be done; but there appears to me to be a possibility of some extremely elaborate details being asked for, applicable to particular units and districts. These would be very cumbrous and very expensive to print in the *Gazette*.

*VISCOUNT MIDLETON did not quite understand why the noble Earl objected. Surely this was a reasonable proposal. A very great change was going to be made in the position of the Volunteers and also of the Yeomanry in their transfer to the Territorial Force. All that was asked by the Amendment was that the actual change in the conditions of service should be explained. For instance, men would be attested instead of being enrolled and they would become liable to serve for four years. His desire was merely that the change in the conditions should be specified in such a manner that they could be readily understood.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: I am informed by experts that it is quite impossible to accept the Amendment as it is proposed. It would be quite unworkable.

*VISCOUNT MIDLETON: If the noble Earl thinks my proposal is unworkable I will communicate with him before the Report stage.

Amendment by leave, withdrawn.

*THE DUKE OF BEDFORD moved an Amendment, the purport of which, he said, was simply that the new county associations should acquire by purchase drill halls and rifle ranges which were now the property of borough or county councils. He hoped that the Government would see their way to accept it.

Amendment moved—

"In page 20, line 28, after the word 'relates' to insert the words 'Provided that any land with the buildings upon it heretofore acquired by the council of any county or borough for military purposes within the meaning of the Military Lands Acts, shall be transferred to the association of the county, and the amount expended by such council in acquiring such land and buildings shall be repaid to such council by the association.—(*The Duke of Bedford.*)

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said he was afraid he could not accept the Amendment. Under the Military Lands Act the councils of counties and boroughs were empowered to acquire land and erect buildings on behalf of Volunteer corps, and to borrow money for the purpose. In pursuance of the powers so conferred a few county and borough councils had provided drill halls—not many—for their local Volunteer corps. The effect of the Amendment of his noble friend would be that all these drill halls and rifle ranges would be compulsorily transferred from the county or borough councils which provided them to the County Associations, and on the other hand, and as a necessary corollary, the associations would be compelled to repay to the councils the whole of the money they had expended on the property. The drill halls and the rifle ranges might have appreciated or they might have depreciated in value. The county or borough council might be unwilling to part with their property. The associations might be unwilling to take that property over. But if this Amendment were inserted in the Bill no party would be given any choice in the matter. The transfer would have to take place, and it did not seem to the Government to be either possible or reasonable to go further than they had done in paragraph (*e*) of the clause. Their Lordships would see that by that paragraph the transfer of such drill halls and rifle ranges might be effected by Order in Council if both the council and the association assented. That was to say, they would make their own arrangements and their own bargain. He was afraid that, for the reasons he had stated, the Government could not accept the Amendment, and he hoped that his noble friend would not feel compelled to press it.

*THE EARL OF MOUNT-EDGCUMBE asked the noble Earl, if he was not able to express any special opinion about it now, to consider the position of rifle ranges which were not the property of county or borough councils, but of county volunteer or rifle associations. Considerable sums had been spent on rifle ranges which would be necessary for the use of County Associations hereafter, and the question was, would they be taken over by the new County Associations or would they remain in possession of the county volunteer or rifle associations? He might ask in fact, would the county volunteer associations continue to exist at all? If they did not, how would the property which they had acquired for the purpose of rifle shooting be dealt with?

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: May I suggest to my noble friend that he should do as he has done on former occasions—that is, write to me on the matter, and I shall be pleased to reply to the best of my ability.

LORD MONTAGU OF BEAULIEU asked the noble Earl to consider the whole question of the transfer of drill halls to County Associations, as it was a very complicated and difficult matter. Some of the drill halls were in the hands of trustees and some were in the hands of commanding officers representing the donors. He understood that the Lord Chancellor was going to look into the whole question of transfer, and perhaps the noble Earl would inform their Lordships on the Report Stage more fully as to the definition of this clause.

LORD RAGLAN said that perhaps the noble Earl would also give them information when the time came as to how a body which had no assets was to take over a liability.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause agreed to.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY moved to insert at the beginning of Part III, the following new clause, "(1) From and after the passing of this Act, the Militia shall become part of the Army Reserve, but shall continue in all respects to be subject to the Militia Act, 1882, except as hereinafter provided. (2) Section 12 of the Militia Act, 1882, shall not apply to any militiaman enlisted or re-engaged after the passing of this Act, and in lieu thereof the following provision shall apply: Any part of the Militia shall be liable to serve in any part of the United Kingdom, and when embodied to serve elsewhere. (3) Any militiaman serving at the date of the passing of this Act may make a voluntary offer, certified by his commanding officer, to serve under the same conditions as a militiaman enlisted after the passing of this Act, and thereupon for the remainder of the term of his service the provisions of this section shall apply to him in the same manner as they apply to a militiaman enlisted after the passing of this Act." He said that they now came back to the question of the Militia, and he had to say quite frankly that he for one was very grateful to the Government for the statement made by the noble Earl, the Under-Secretary for War, at the beginning of the Committee Stage. The only thing he would like to add on that point was that he thought it would be for the convenience of their Lordships, and in order that it should be on record that the Under-Secretary had given that assurance, that a memorandum should be presented to Parliament covering the ground which the noble Earl covered in his very lucid statement. If that could be done he was sure it would be a very satisfactory way of placing on record, in a permanent form, the assurance given by the noble Earl. Having made that preface, he would be expected to explain why it was he was not yet satisfied, and was moving this Amendment. His defence for so doing was that he really believed the Amendment carried out the wishes of His Majesty's Government. He had two grounds for that view: First of all, the intrinsic merits of the Amendment, which he should describe to their Lordships later, and secondly, the fact that in all probability this was the original intention of the Secretary of

State. The right hon. Gentleman in another place confessed in the most naive manner that he himself had, at a previous period, a strong temptation in the direction taken by the concession which he then made to the Opposition. He was only asking the right hon. Gentleman, therefore, to revert entirely and heartily, if he might say so, to his old love. The right hon. Gentleman was no doubt misled for a short time by the novel charms of the special reserve, but as a matter of fact the original darling of his heart was undeniably the sober and demure Militia to which he had now reverted. Under these circumstances he (the Marquess of Salisbury) felt that he was not committing any act hostile to the Government when he suggested to them that they would do well, not only to use the Militia, but to use also the machinery by which the Militia had been governed in the past, subject, of course, to certain definite exceptions, one of which was that they should serve abroad in time of need. He had said that the acceptance of the Amendment was advisable because it carried out the original intention of the Secretary of State, but it was also advisable on its merits. As the Bill stood before their Lordships there were a great many omissions. The Government intended to use the Militia as a special reserve. They intended to use its traditions; to take over what he might call the goodwill of the business as a going concern. One essential thing in that goodwill was the name of the Militia. Undoubtedly the Government would use the name of the Militia if they could, but how were they going to transfer the name of the Militia from the force as it was now known to the special reserve unless they used the Militia Act. He would run very rapidly through one or two other points. There was the period of service. For the first time, as he believed, in the history of the military forces of the Crown there was no period of service prescribed in the Bill for the men of the special reserve. The men of the Army were very particularly limited. Their engagement was for twelve years. The period of service in the case of men of the Militia was rigidly defined. It was six years. But in the case of the special reserve no limit whatever was put in the Act of Parliament. It might be six years, or twelve years, or for life so far as the Bill was concerned. Then the special reserve was not territorialised. It was quite true that under the clause the Army Council were given power to form these special reservists into battalions and corps, but when a man was enlisted he could not be enlisted as a special reservist into any special corps. That was entirely different from the practice in the Army and the existing practice in the Militia. He believed also that it was contrary to the intention of the Government themselves, because they followed territorial feeling. Their Lordships had often been told that it was intended to maintain in its integrity the territorial character of the Army, and that it was hoped this new reserve would be territorial, just as much as the Army, the Militia, and the Volunteers were territorial. But it was not provided for in the Bill. There was no provision that a man could be enlisted into any particular corps. Then there was no appropriate attestation. The Government recognised that the attestation used for the soldiers would not do, and they had announced that they were going to have another, but they had not yet told Parliament what its form was to be. In the Militia Act there was a form of attestation prescribed. Then there was not a sufficient provision in the Bill for re-engagement. He was aware that the noble Earl had an Amendment on the Paper to cover that point, but it was not until his attention was drawn to the omission that the Government awoke to the fact that they had left out a provision as to how men were to be re-engaged. There was on the face of the Bill as it stood no provision for the disembodiment of the special reserve. Undoubtedly the Government were going to try to meet that by another Amendment, but he did not think it was a very adequate one. It did not cover all the ground, but it certainly illustrated the point he was speaking upon, namely, that in the form in which the Bill was laid before the House none of these points were dealt with. It was especially striking that the Government had made no provision in their Bill for passing men from the special reserve into the Army itself. That was one of the essentia parts of the plan. Just as the Militia now furnished 12,000 men a year to the Line so the special reserve must go on furnishing 12,000 or 13,000 men a year to the Line. The Militia Act provided for every one of the things which he had specified to their Lordships. As regards the last point he had mentioned, which was a matter of very great importance, no doubt it could be got round. He did not deny that. What would happen if a man wished to transfer was that he would be first discharged from the special reserve and then re-enlisted in the Line. That was, however, a very awkward and clumsy arrangement. He saw no reason why a man who wished to get out of the special reserve without buying his discharge should not go to the officers and say that he wished to enlist in the Army. "Very well," they would say, "then you must first be discharged from the special reserve." The man would be discharged, and then he might say, "I will not take the oath and be attested for the Army." The result would be that the man would secure his discharge without having to buy it and the country would lose his services. He did not desire, however, to lay too great stress on any of these points which he had no doubt could all be got over by Amendments. It seemed a great pity, however, that where the Government had the choice of two Acts of Parliament, one which provided for all these things—the Militia Act and one which provided for none of them—the Reserve Forces Act—they should have gone out of their way to choose the least convenient of the two Acts. It was not surprising that the Reserve Forces Act was not adequate. It was not intended at all for the purposes for which the Government were using it. It was passed in order to provide a reserve of men whose training was a matter of the past, whose territorial connection was already clear—men who had served their time in the Line, and were going to be passed into the reserve. None of the provisions which he had described were necessary to them; but when the Government were enlisting a man for the first time then all these things became of importance. It was important that there should be a right form of attestation, it was important that the number of years a man was to serve should be specified, and it was important that the particular battalion to which he was to be attached should be communicated to him when he took the oath. The Government had, as it were, used for the purpose of a prologue a piece of literature which was really designed for an epilogue. Therefore it was found when they applied this Act of Parliament for their purpose that it was not suitable and not apt. He invited the Government in their own interests to go to the logical conclusion of the change which they made when they resumed their attachment to the Militia, an attachment which, as he had said, wandered away; he invited them to go to that logical conclusion by using the Act of Parliament which was suitable for the Militia. He believed if they did that they would find the drafting of their Bill much more complete, and at the same time they would gratify the Militia. Why did he say that? Because if the Government did what he suggested it would be a public advertisement which could be mistaken by no one that the Government did not intend by this change to disturb the Militia, or its constitution, or its tradition, or its function in any way whatsoever, except in the particulars which were essential to their serving abroad in time of trouble. That seemed to him to be a complete case. If the Government were good enough to consider his Amendment he would not of course adhere strictly to the precise words in which it was drafted. He did, however, press on the Government that the case he had made was really very complete.

Amendment moved—

"To insert as a new clause: '(1) From and after the passing of this Act the Militia shall become part of the Army Reserve, but shall continue in all respects to be subject to the Militia Act, 1882, except as hereinafter provided. (2) Section 12 of the Militia Act, 1882, shall not apply to any Militiaman enlisted or re-engaged after the passing of this Act, and in lieu thereof the following provision shall apply: Any part of the Militia shall be liable to serve in any part of the United Kingdom, and when embodied to serve elsewhere. (3) Any Militiaman serving at the date of the passing of this Act may make a voluntary offer, certified by his commanding officer, to serve under the same conditions as a Militiaman enlisted after the passing of this Act, and thereupon for the remainder of the term of his service the provisions of the section shall apply to him in the same manner as they apply to a Militiaman enlisted after the passing of this Act.' "—(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*)

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH thought that the noble Marquess had somewhat indulged, if he might say so, in the language of imagination in honouring Acts of Parliament with the name of literature. The real difficulty in which they had been placed on that side of the House was that they had, he hoped generally to the advantage of the different forces and of good feeling, met the views and wishes of the Militia. When the Bill was originally drafted, the place of the Militia in the Government's scheme was really a very different one from that which it now occupied. He did not want to quarrel with the noble Marquess over questions of form; but after all, this resolved itself very much into a question of drafting. He hoped very much that there were now no questions of principle in conflict between them; but he wanted to explain why the Government could not accept the proposal of the noble Marquess in the form in which he had brought it forward. At the same time he wished to give this undertaking, that they would, between then and Report, where they had not already got Amendments—he was going to propose one or two if they could be taken in Committee—prepare Amendments which, moved on Report, would give effect to the arrangement at which they had arrived. The Amendment of the noble Marquess was, however, open to a great many serious drafting objections. It proposed that the Militia should become part of the Regular Forces. That he knew, was not the intention of the noble Marquess.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I was impressed with that difficulty, and therefore I changed the drafting of my Amendment last night. If the noble Earl looks at it he will see that it is the Army Reserve now and not the Regular Forces. The Amendment says that: " from and after the passing of this Act, the Militia shall become part of the Army Reserve."

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH, continuing, said that the alteration having been made, that particular difficulty had been overcome. Turning to another point, the Militia might still theoretically be raised, not only by enlistment, but also by ballot. The Amendment of the noble Marquess would therefore make balloted men part of the Regular Forces and—under the definition of Regular Forces above quoted—liable to render continual military service in any part of the world. The Militia Act of 1882, which would continue to apply to the Militia, would prevent them being used as drafts for the Regulars, as Clause 4, Sub-section (4), of the Act of 1882 provided that where the corps of a militiaman included any battalion or any body of the Regular Forces, orders or regulations made under the Act were not to authorise him to be posted without his assent to that battalion or body. The Amendment would prevent a militiaman being employed abroad, except when embodied; and it might be very necessary to have militiamen in Section A of the reserve, which was liable to be called out for service without any Proclamation. But apart from these objections, which the noble Marquess might consider were drafting objections, although they were very serious ones, the proposal of the noble Marquess was open to considerable objections of substance. It would keep the Militia alive as a separate force with distinct terms of service and distinct regulations. It would preserve the whole of the existing 124 battalions of Militia, whereas there was only room in the reserve for 101 battalions, and the effect of Sub-section (3) of the clause would be that for six years, the present term for which militiamen were enlisted, the Militia battalions would include, on the one hand, men who were not liable for foreign service, and, on the other, men who were so liable. The former class of men could not be used for drafting purposes, and therefore for six years after the Militia battalions became third and fourth battalions they would be encumbered with a number of men who were useless for the purposes which the third and fourth battalions were intended to subserve. For these reasons the Government found it quite impossible to accept the Amendment of the noble Marquess, and he hoped in saying that it would be understood that their non-acceptance of it was on a matter of form, although a serious one. He did not wish for a moment that the noble Marquess or anyone else inside or outside that House, should imagine that he wished to go back by one word on the statement he had previously made to the House. He believed that he gave an undertaking to the noble Marquess that he would have the statement he made to their Lordships prepared and drawn up as a memorandum which could be laid on the Table of the House. Not only was it the intention of the Government to put the matter straight as regarded what they could do by legislation, but, as he had said before, they wanted to act up to the letter as well as the spirit of their declaration. It was well-known, of course, that if they were driven to accept certain things in the letter they could, if they did not wish to keep them in good faith, always destroy them in the spirit. That was not, however, either their wish or their intention, and he hoped, under the circumstances, that the noble Marquess would not press his Amendment.

*LORD HARRIS hoped that the noble Earl would give the House some explanation as to how he anticipated the men of the fourteen squadrons were to be secured. Who was going to enlist them? Were they going to be obtained from the Yeomanry regiments or not?

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said that personally he did not desire to press his Amendment on the Government. He was afraid, however, that he could not accept the answers of the noble Earl as to the ballot. Everyone knew it to be unworkable in its present form. It was, if he might say so, only a bugbear. He did not wish, however, to detain their Lordships at that late hour. Therefore, he asked leave to withdraw the Amendment, but he hoped he would be allowed to return to the subject after seeing the Amendment which the noble Earl had said he intended to move either on this or the report stage.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause 29:—

*LORD HARRIS asked what inducement was to be given to the Yeomanry regiments to get men to enlist as special reservists. It seemed to him that these men would have very little connection with the regiment when once they had gone into the special reserve. Were they to continue to wear the uniform of the regiment? As far as he could make out, a troop leader who had got one or two of the men of the special reserve in his troop would never see them, and he would hardly know that they belonged to the regiment, because their connection with the regiment would practically have ceased. Then again, if they were not recruited from the regiment who was going to recruit them? Were the ordinary recruiting agencies of the Army to be at liberty to recruit these men without reference to the colonel of the regiment and attach them to the regiment without his consent? There was no explanation about these matters in the Bill, and, in the first place, he hoped that the noble Earl would tell them how the men were to be secured. Secondly, he wanted to know who was going to train these men when once they were attached to the Army Reserve. From what he had heard he believed they were going to be trained with the training battalions or regiments. Apparently the same mistake was going to be made with the special reservists that was made with the second contingent of Imperial Yeomanry during the South African War. The first contingent were trained by the colonel and the corps with excellent results. The second contingent were deliberately taken away from the colonel and the corps and sent down to Aldershot in the most inclement weather with no one to look after them. They were afterwards despatched to South Africa untrained and handed over to the columns still untrained, with the result that they were abused by everybody, although as a matter of fact they never had half a chance. There was some risk of the special reservist experiencing the same difficulties, because no one would care the proverbial two pennyworth what became of him. He would have, so far as he could see, no home, unless a home was going to be found for him somewhere in connection with the training regiments of which he had spoken. Was the service troop found by the regiment to be a part of the regiment, or was it to be in excess of the establishment of the regiment? If it was to be a part of the establishment of the regiment then obviously the regiment would always be one troop short, because these men would not come out, he expected, for the annual training of the regiment. They were to be trained, he supposed, in the training regiment and not with their own regiment. If they were to be in excess of the establishment of the regiment it was quite another matter, and in that case there would be no cause of complaint. It was obvious, however, that there was a good deal of uncertainty as to how these men were to be secured, what was to happen to them when they had been obtained, and to what unit of the service they were to belong. He hoped, if not that night, at any rate on the Report Stage, the noble Earl would be able to give a clear explanation about these matters and thus remove the present feeling of uncertainty.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said he had taken down a good many of the points which his noble friend had put to him, but he did not really know that he need at once go into all the details of the various matters on which he had touched. He (the Earl of Portsmouth) had mentioned already, but he thought his noble friend was not present at the time, that a Committee had been appointed under the presidency of Lord Scarbrough, and it was expected to go into all these details. He might tell his noble friend, however, that these men would be recruited from the regiments. The Government attached the greatest possible importance to securing that interchange—the men being recruited from the regiment and going back to the regiment. He had an Amendment to Clause 29 which he would now move.

Amendment moved—

"In page 21, line 31, after the word 'reservists' to insert the words 'and a special reservist may be re-engaged, and when re-engaged shall continue subject to the terms of service applicable to special reservists.'"—(*The Earl of Portsmouth.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Lord Harris.

Amendments moved—

"In page 22, line 7, after the word 'enlisted' to insert the words 'or re-engaged.'"

"In page 22, line 10, after the word 'period' to insert as a new subsection '(5) When a proclamation ordering the Army Reserve to be called out on permanent service has been issued, it shall be lawful for His Majesty at any time thereafter by proclamation to order that all special reservists shall cease to be so called out, and thereupon the Secretary of State shall give such directions as may seem necessary or proper for carrying the said proclamation into effect.'" (*The Earl of Portsmouth.*)

On Question, Amendments agreed to.

Clause 29, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 30 agreed to.

Clause 31:—

LORD RAGLAN said he did not see it laid down anywhere what inducement was to be offered to a special reservist to join the special section. Could the noble Earl inform the House what it was proposed to offer these men?

LORD LUCAS understood that the amount of the bounty had already been stated to be £4. It was not usually however, included under the Act, but it would be laid down in regulations.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said he had hoped that the Government would have reconsidered the point about the £4. Surely the Government realised that to offer the special reservists 10s. less bounty than he got as a Militiaman would be almost certain to result in the militiaman not transferring his services. How could the Militia be expected to transfer their services if they got 10s. less in consequence of doing so? He knew that they were to get a certain sum down because the noble Earl told the House so on the previous night, but for every other year except the first year they would have 10s. less. He thought that that was a most dangerous change to make if the Government expected the existing militiamen to transfer their services. The Government had announced that a militiaman who did not transfer his services would not only receive £4 10s., but would not be called out for training at all.

It seemed rather strange that a man should not only be let off from his obligation for service, but still get his £4 10s.

LORD LUCAS said that a question had been asked as to whether a militiaman would get the non-training bounty if he did not transfer and was not called out. That had been replied to in the affirmative. He believed it was stated that the reason why the bounty was fixed at £4 was because the pay of annual training for which, after all, the Militia was being paid was considerably shorter under the new terms of service than it was under the present conditions. That he believed was the reason which led the Government to fix the bounty at £4.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Do I understand the noble Lord to say that the militiaman will get the £4 10s. if he does not transfer?

LORD LUCAS said he had pointed out to the noble Marquess that the statement made on that subject was to the effect that the militiaman who did not transfer would until the end of his period of service receive the non-training bounty. He did not know whether it was the intention of the Government to give him the £4 10s., the non-training bounty being, he believed £3.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said the question was what would the financial position be of a militiaman who did not transfer. Would he get the £4 10s. a year which was the full amount of the bounty he got at the present time, or would he get £3? If he was going to be left with his full £4 10s. there was a great deal to be said for it, because it was a matter more or less of contract with him when he was originally enlisted. It was rather difficult to say at this time of day that because the Government had changed their policy he was to be deprived of 30s. of his bounty which was part of the consideration for which he undertook to serve for six years. He thought that the Government ought to give at least as much to the militiaman if he was asked to transfer as he received at present.

LORD RAGLAN said that the noble Lord (Lord Portsmouth) had not yet answered the question which he put to him about the special reservists. Under Clause 31 what inducements were going to be offered to them? Militia commanding officers would be put in a most difficult position. They had the vaguest idea of what duties these men were to be asked to perform, and they had no indication whatever as to what they were going to get for undertaking that liability.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH was afraid he could not answer the question of the noble Lord at the moment, for the very good reason that the matter had not been considered by the Government.

LORD LUCAS said that in order to prevent anything he had said in his previous remarks being perhaps misunderstood, he might point out that existing militiamen who transferred to the special contingent would go on getting the same bounty as they were receiving at the present time; so that an existing militiaman who became a member of the special contingent would continue to draw his £4 10s. bounty.

Clauses 30 and 31 agreed to.

Clause 32:—

LORD RAGLAN asked how this Bill was going to affect that arm of the service to which he belonged—namely, the Militia Engineers? They had heard something about Infantry, and something about Artillery, but nothing had been said, nor could he see anything in the Bill, as to what was to happen to the Engineers—under what conditions their recruits were to be trained, and so forth. It was absolutely impossible to train an engineer by giving him fifteen days training a year. Anybody with the most elementary acquaintance with military engineering must know that there was an immense quantity of instruction to be imparted to Engineers. At the present time his own regiment trained part for seven weeks and part for eight weeks in the year, and he could assure His Majesty's Government that they had not an hour too much for what they had to teach the men. He therefore asked the noble Earl if now, or at a later stage of the Bill, he would be in a position to give him any indication as to what was to be the future position of the Militia Engineers. There were only two corps—quite little ones—and therefore it was not a very big question. At the same time it affected 1,600 men who constituted, he might venture to say, not the worst corps in the Militia, and he considered it very important to know what was going to happen with regard to them.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH appreciated the interest expressed by the noble Lord in the matter, which he had only had before him for a day or two, and in regard to which, therefore, he could not give detailed information at the moment. As soon, however, as he was in a position to give the House any accurate information on the subject, he would do so. He proposed now, with the permission of the House, to insert a new clause of which he had given notice to the noble Marquess—a new clause to be inserted after Clause 32. He proposed to hand in that clause.

On Question, Clause 32 agreed to.

After Clause 32 :—

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said that the new clause which he had placed in the hands of the noble Marquess some time ago and now moved was an endeavour to give effect to some of the promises he had made with respect to the Militia.

Amendment moved—

> " After Clause 32, to insert the following new clause—'(1) His Majesty may by Order in Council transfer to the Army Reserve such battalions of the Militia as may be specified in the Order, and every battalion so transferred shall, from the date mentioned in the Order, be deemed to have been lawfully formed under this part of this Act as a battalion of special reservists. (2) As from the said date every officer of any battalion so transferred shall be deemed to be an officer in the reserve of officers and every man in such battalion shall be deemed to be a special reservist, and the Order may contain such provisions as may seem necessary for applying the provisions of the Reserve Forces Act, 1882, as amended by this Act, to those officers and men; provided that if any officer or man in any battalion so transferred at the time of such transfer indicates his objection, nothing in this Order shall affect his existing condition of service.' "—(*Earl of Portsmouth.*)

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said that *The Times* report of the clause as read out to the House by the noble Earl yesterday was quite accurate. With regard to the form of the words, he had no objection whatever personally to those words, but he would like to have a little explanation of the sentence—

> " And the Order may contain such provisions as may seem necessary for applying the provisions of the Reserve Forces Act, 1882, as amended by this Act, to those officers and men."

That appeared to give the Government a very wide power. He had no doubt they desired to possess a very wide power. Under those words it might be possible to put right some of the omissions to which he had called attention in the few remarks he had made just previously, and if that were possible, he would be all the more glad to assent to the clause.

On Question, new clause agreed to.

Clause 33 agreed to.

After Clause 33 :—

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH moved to insert a new clause providing that the acceptance of a commission in the reserve of officers should not vacate a seat in Parliament. That was a point which had been overlooked in the House of Commons, and it seemed necessary to the Government to insert this new clause, which he hoped the House would accept.

Amendment moved—

> " After Clause 33, to insert the following new clause :—' The acceptance of a commission as an officer in the reserve of officers shall not vacate the seat of any Members returned to serve in Parliament.' "—(*The Earl of Portsmouth.*)

VISCOUNT MIDLETON suggested that the word "Member" be substituted for the word " Members."

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said he had no objection if the word "Member" was thought better.

On Question, new clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 34 :—

VISCOUNT MIDLETON (who had upon the Paper an Amendment providing for the laying of Orders in Council under the Act before each House of Parliament within a certain period) asked whether the noble Earl was prepared to accept his Amendment.

*THE EARL OF CREWE : We do not accept the noble Viscount's Amendment.

VISCOUNT MIDLETON said that under those circumstances he was afraid he must trouble their Lordships for a few moments, because it was a most important matter. At present the position they stood in with regard to the Bill was that all schemes which were put forward in the first clause of the Bill were laid before both Houses of Parliament, and either House could raise any objection to them. There was no necessity for the Government in any way to come to Parliament for fresh powers for schemes laid before Parliament. Turning to Clauses 13 and 14 of the Bill they would find that all matters subject to Orders in Council under those clauses were also laid before Parliament, and if no objection was taken, they had the force of law ; but it was in the power of either House of Parliament within forty days to present an address in addition. Then there came a large number of matters which were the subject of Orders in Council in Clause 28, and those Orders in Council were simply ordered to be laid before Parliament, and no power was given for Parliament to take any action whatever with regard to them. What were those matters ? They involved provisions in the case of officers who remained subject to the provisions of the Act as to conditions and area of service ; they involved the question of transferring to the association any property belonging to a unit ; they involved the question of the transfer to the association of any liabilities of any unit which the association was willing to assume, and of providing for the discharge of any such liabilities not so transferred ; they involved the question of the transfer to the association of any land or interest acquired by the council of a county or borough ; and they involved the question of the continuance of the right of recommending for first appointment. All those were important subjects. It had been almost a universal practice in such cases of transfers in other Acts of Parliament that there were provisions for Orders in Council being laid before Parliament and power of objection by Parliament being given. Perhaps the most apposite case was the Endowed Schools Act of 1873, in which every scheme had to be laid before Parliament for two months. Again, in the Judicature Act of 1875 the Order in Council relating to Rules of Court were laid before Parliament for forty days, and could be objected to. Again, in the Landlord and Tenant (Ireland) Act of 1881, the Rules were to be laid before Parliament for 100 days, and power in addition was given to Parliament in every kind of case, not merely on such important matters as the transfer of property, but even with regard to the forms to be used, the scale of costs, and even the attendance of officers at their offices, the service of notices, and so on. All those were under the Act of 1881 laid before Parliament, and power of objection was given to either House. And there were other Acts which gave similar powers. He thought it would be a little regrettable if His Majesty's Government, having recognised that in all the matters connected with the administration of this Act,and which were the subject of Orders in Council, the regulations should be subject to the review of Parliament in any exceptional cases in which Parliament might desire to review them, they should select a matter of such great importance as this for exemption from such opportunity of review. He did not wish at that hour to trouble their Lordships with any lengthy remarks, but he thought the noble Lord would find some difficulty in establishing a difference between the earlier portions of the Act and this later portion which was to be withdrawn from the cognisance of Parliament. It was true that—he presumed as a matter of courtesy—these questions were to be laid before Parliament, but after they had been so laid, Parliament was not to be allowed to pronounce against them. He therefore hoped that the Government would accept his Amendment.

Amendment moved—

"At the beginning of the clause to insert the words 'Every Order in Council required by this Act to be laid before each House of Parliament shall be so laid within forty days next after it is made, if Parliament is then sitting, or if not, within forty days after the commencement of the then next ensuing session; and, if an address is presented to His Majesty by either House of Parliament within the next subsequent forty days on which the said House shall have sat, praying that any such Rule or Order may be annulled, His Majesty may thereupon by Order in Council annul the same, and the Order so annulled shall thenceforth become void and of no effect, but without prejudice to the validity of any proceedings which may in the meantime have been taken under the same.'"—(*Viscount Midleton.*)

*THE EARL OF CREWE: I will explain as briefly as I can how it comes about that the Government are not in a position to accept this Amendment. The House will remark that the noble Viscount has pointed out that by an Amendment which was accepted yesterday schemes were to be subject to the revision, in a sense, of this House, and it was an original provision of the Bill that the important possible alterations to be made by Order in Council with reference to military training should lie in draft in the usual manner before they were confirmed as Orders in Council. The natural course for the noble Viscount would have been to have moved for a similar provision at the end of Part II. applying to the transitory provisions, which are the only ones in the Act to which this provision of Clause 34 applies. I take it he did not do that for a very obvious reason—namely, that being transitory provisions—that is to say, being concerned with transfers of different kinds which are to take place under this Act—it is the natural desire that their operation should be as continuous as possible. If the noble Lord had moved that these Orders should lie on the table of the House for forty days, it is perfectly obvious that the whole of the transitory operations might have been brought to a standstill. That, I have no doubt, is a very excellent reason why he did not move his Amendment in that place. Instead of that, he has moved his Amendment in a form which has never, so far as I know, been included in any Act of Parliament. On that, I challenge contradiction. Attempts have often been made to introduce those particular provisions into minor Acts of Parliament, but I never remember their being seriously introduced by so responsible a Member of either House as the noble Viscount. One case came before us this year in which in a Bill of some importance which never proceeded very far, a similar provision was sought to be inserted; and we objected to it on the grounds upon which every attempt of the kind has always been objected to. What the noble Viscount suggests is this: that His Majesty in Council should approve an Order in Council, and then, after that Order has been approved, it is to come back to the House, and your Lordships are to run the risk of the possibility of placing the Sovereign in Council and one House of Parliament in direct conflict. It appears to me that such a position is one which surely this House would be exceedingly unwilling to occupy; and I should have thought it was scarcely respectful to the Crown to suggest the possibility of such a thing occurring. I am bound to protest against the form of the noble Lord's Amendment; and I trust that, after the explanation I have given, he will not press it. The usual course of laying Orders in Council in draft on the Table is one which I have shown to be practically inapplicable to this particular part of the Bill; and the attempt to get over the difficulty in the manner which the noble Viscount has suggested is one to which we cannot possibly agree. It might save time, in view of the noble Duke's (the Duke of Northumberland) Amendment, if I were to explain that this clause is really common form; it is of a kind which frequently occurs in Acts of Parliament. The Interpretation Act provides that where people are empowered to issue rules and regulations, it is implicitly understood that they can go on issuing fresh rules and regulations. But that does not apply to schemes or Orders in Council; and therefore it is customary that where Orders in Council have to be, as is obviously the case here, renewed or revised, or anything else of that kind, a provision to that effect should be placed in the Bill.

VISCOUNT MIDLETON said that he was not quite convinced by the noble Earl's argument. With regard to the transitory nature of these provisions, there was nothing whatever to prevent the same action being taken as was taken in all other cases. The Government could proceed; and if Parliament should subsequently interfere no prejudice was created as regarded any act which they had already committed, but further power of action was then withdrawn. As regarded the form which the noble Earl had criticised, he must point out that it was merely the same form as in Clause 15 had already been applied to other parts of the Bill.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: I beg the noble Lord's pardon. Under Clause 15 the Order is to be laid in draft before Parliament, not after it has been approved by the Council.

VISCOUNT MIDLETON admitted that that was so in the case of Clause 15; but that would not be so in the case of the scheme under Clause 1, nor was it so in the other cases he had cited in other Acts of Parliament.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: Schemes are not approved by His Majesty in Council.

*VISCOUNT MIDLETON said that was the case in the Landlord and Tenant (Ireland) Act in a variety of most important matters. He could cite to their Lordships twelve different cases under the schedule of that Act in which that was the case; and it was also the case in the Endowed Schools Act as well as in the Judicature Act. The latter case was not one of a draft, but of an Order in Council already made; and he thought that as the Amendment which he had moved was not his own drafting in any way, but legal drafting, the noble Lord would find that its form was absolutely correct. He should very deeply regret if their Lordships parted altogether with their powers with regard to these very important questions, as to which, with all respect, he would say that His Majesty's Government had left a certain amount of vagueness still existing, and as to which he thought it desirable Parliament should not part altogether with its power of criticising.

THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE said the Lord President had argued that the provisions to which the Amendment would apply were provisions of a transitory nature; but they were not all of such a nature. The Amendment, as he understood it, would cover the provisions in Clause 27, Subsection (3), which stated that His Majesty in Council might apply certain enactments to the Territorial Army. That was an extremely important question for Parliament to part with the criticism of, and it was one in connection with which the Government evidently now asked for a free hand. He thought that consideration considerably minimised the force of the noble Lord's argument; and that it was extremely important that Parliament should retain some method of control over these transfers.

On Question whether the proposed words should be there inserted,

Their Lordships divided: Contents, 54; Not-Contents, 21.

CONTENTS.

Bedford, D.
Richmond and Gordon, D.

Bath, M.
Camden, M.
Hertford, M.
Lansdowne, M.
Salisbury, M.

Camperdown, E.
Cathcart, E.
Cawdor, E.
Cranbrook, E.
Dartrey, E.
Devon, E.

Lindsey, E.
Lonsdale, E.
Morton, E.
Mount-Edgcumbe, E.
Onslow, E.
Roberts, E.
Romney, E.
Scarbrough, E.
Waldegrave, E. [*Teller.*]
Westmeath, E.

Falmouth, V.
Goschen, V.
Hampden, V.
Hardinge, V.

Hill, V.
Hutchinson, V. (*E. Donoughmore.*)

Abinger, L.
Addington, L.
Ampthill, L.
Basing, L.
Belper, L.
Brodrick, L. (*V. Midleton.*)
Clifford of Chudleigh, L.
Clinton, L.
Clonbrock, L.
Colchester, L.
Digby, L.

Dunboyne, L.
Ellenborough, L.
Fingall, L. (*E. Fingall.*)
Forester, L.
Harris, L.
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Methuen, L.
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Esher, V.
Allendale, L.
Brassey, L.
Colebrooke, L.
Denman, L. [*Teller.*]
Elgin, E. (*E. Elgin and Kincardine.*)
Fitzmaurice, L.
Glantawe, L.
Granard, L. (*E. Granard.*) [*Teller.*]
Hamilton of Dalzell, L.
Haversham, L.
Kinnaird, L.
Lucas, L.
Ribblesdale, L.
Sudley, L. (*E. Arran.*)

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND, who had a Motion upon the Paper to leave out Clause 34, said that, as he gathered from what had fallen from the noble Earl that the Government were not prepared to accept his Amendment in the form in which he had orginally put it upon the Paper, he would, with the leave of the House, move it in another form; because he quite recognised that it was impossible, after what had been said, to leave out the whole clause. He would therefore move that they leave out the word "Orders" in the first line of the clause, which would, he thought, enable him to raise the point that he wished to raise. He could not help thinking that the noble Earl had rather misunderstood the object which he (the Duke of Northumberland) had in view in moving this Amendment. He did not wish to touch the question of the Orders in Council, which it had just been decided to leave alone. The schemes had already been dealt with by the House, and it had been decided that they must be laid before Parliament. Now it was proposed to leave in the Orders of the Army Council, and the regulations which the Army Council might make under this Act, and they would then have the force of an Act of Parliament. Surely, that could not be intended. Was it really intended that the Orders of a body like the Army Council were to have the force of an Act of Parliament, so that any act which they did, and any Order which they made, or any regulation which they made, could not be appealed against? He was assured, the other day, upon legal authority that under this clause, even if the Army Council did something which was *ultra vires*, if it was taken before a Court of law, that Court of law would say that in the face of this clause it had the effect of an Act of Parliament, and therefore could not be considered by His Majesty's Judges. Surely that could not be intended. He believed he would be raising the point correctly if he moved to leave out the second word "Orders" in the first line

Amendment moved—

"On page 23, line 33, to leave out the word 'Orders.'"—(*The Duke of Northumberland.*)

THE EARL OF ONSLOW: Do I correctly understand that that is the only word in the whole clause which the noble Duke wishes to omit? The word "Orders" occurs again more than once further down. Perhaps the noble Duke will move that, in the first instance.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND: That was my idea, to move that in the first instance.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: I wonder whether the noble Duke has fully considered what the full effect of that Amendment will be? He desires that every Order made by the Army Council under this Act shall be laid on the Table of the House.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND said that was not what he intended; he had simply asked that an Order of the Army Council should not have the effect of an Act of Parliament. There was nothing in the clause about laying it on the Table of the House.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: On this point I speak with diffidence, because it is a purely legal point. I think the noble Duke is unreasonably alarmed at what he thinks will be the effect of these words. They are words which are very frequently placed in Acts of Parliament, and I believe their legal force is not very great; they have very often been put into similar Acts of Parliament; and it has been found convenient in practice to have them in. As a matter of fact, the rather alarming effects suggested by the noble Duke could not and do not happen. The noble Duke, I understand, does not object to power being given to the Army Council to revise and vary the regulations. It is the fact that all Orders are to have the force of law to which he objects. I do not suggest it to the noble Duke, because I am not in a position to make any bargain with him upon the subject, but would not his object be more fully met by leaving in the word "Orders," and omitting the last words of the clause?

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND said he should be very happy to adopt the suggestion of the noble Earl, if it would have the effect which he desired; but he was afraid that would not be the case. If the noble Lord would tell him what he would accept, it would be of considerable assistance to him. What he thought was wanted was that in line 37 of Clause 34 the words "Orders" and "Regulations" should be left out. He thought that would meet the case.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: Not "Regulations," I hope. The word "Regulations" in any case ought not to be omitted; because, by the Interpretation Act, there is power to vary and revise Regulations in all Acts of Parliament, and there is no reason why that power should be different in this case. But I still do not understand the noble Duke's point. I understood that his objection was not to varying or revoking the Orders so much as to the fact that all orders and schemes of the Army Council should have the same effect as if they had been enacted in this Bill. But, if that be so, why does he propose to leave in those words and to leave out the word "Orders" only? Because he does not object, as I understand, to the power to vary an Order.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND was sorry he had been so obscure. Perhaps, if he were allowed to read the clause, he could show what he meant. What he proposed to leave in the clause was as follows:—

> "All Orders in Council, orders, schemes, and regulations made under this Act may be varied or revoked by subsequent Orders in Council, orders, schemes, and regulations made in the like manner and subject to the like conditions, and all such Orders in Council and schemes, whilst in force, shall have effect as if enacted in this Act."

He wished to leave out "Orders" and "Regulations." What he objected to was not their being varied, but their having the power of an Act of Parliament. He did not think they should give to the Army Council the power to make Orders and Regulations which were never to be laid before Parliament. He could quite see that the Army Council should have the power in question, but not that their exercise of that power should have the validity of an Act of Parliament.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN asked why the noble Duke left in the word "scheme."

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND replied that "scheme" had already the validity of an Act of Parliament.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH suggested that the noble Duke should adhere to his original Amendment, and move to leave out altogether Clause 34.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND: Would the Government assent to that?

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: Yes.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND: I am quite willing to take that course.

THE EARL OF ONSLOW: The noble Duke will observe that that will necessitate leaving out the words at the beginning of the clause, which the Committee have just agreed to insert.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: The point appears to be a very difficult and technical one. But I think that many who sit here would think twice before we voted for the omission of the whole clause. The point whether "Orders" and "Regulations" should be omitted in the penultimate line of the clause seems to be a matter worthy of consideration; and I should have thought the noble Lord in charge of the Bill would have undertaken to consider it before the Report stage.

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH did not desire to discuss a question in Committee which should have been decided by the House itself.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND said it seemed strange that the Government should attach great importance to preserving "Regulations," and yet should have no objection to striking out the whole clause, which struck out "Regulations" also.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: I have a further suggestion to make to the noble Duke; that he should leave in the first four lines—

> "All Orders in Council, orders, schemes and regulations made under this Act may be varied or revoked by subsequent Orders in Council, orders, schemes, and regulations made in the like manner and subject to the like conditions"—

and leave out the rest.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND said that would be satisfactory to him.

On question, Amendment as amended agreed to.

Clause as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 35 and 36 agreed to.

Clause 37:—

LORD MONTAGU OF BEAULIEU in moving that the provision in Subsection (4) that the Governor of the Isle of Wight should be ex-officio a member of the Association of the County of Southampton should be enlarged so as to include the Deputy-Governor, inquired whether the Government had noticed the strange effect which the clause as it stood in the Bill would have in regard to the Isle of Wight? The present Governor of the Isle of Wight was the Princess Henry of Battenburg; and it seemed hardly right for a Royal Princess to sit on an association and to take part in possibly turbulent proceedings. He suggested that the clause should read "Governor or Deputy-Governor."

Amendment moved—

> "In page 24, line 25, after the word 'Governor,' to insert the words 'or Deputy-Governor."—(*Lord Montagu of Beaulieu.*)

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said he quite saw the force of the proposed Amendment, and there would be no objection to making the alteration suggested by the noble Lord. He supposed there was such a person as a Deputy-Governor of the Isle of Wight?

LORD MONTAGU OF BEAULIEU: Yes.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 37, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 38:—

LORD MONTAGU OF BEAULIEU moved an Amendment to substitute "National Guard" for "Territorial Army" as a description of the Territorial Force. He said it was generally admitted in all quarters of the House that the term "Territorial Army" was not satisfactory; it was a tremendous mouthful and would never be pronounced properly when speech-making commenced after dinner; it would be liable to all kinds of abuses, and he could foresee the Territorial Army in the future being called "Haldane's Terriers" or even "Haldane's Terrors." He did not wish that the force should start with a bad reputation by reason of having a bad name. There was a great deal in a name, as the noble Lord in charge of the Bill would admit; and he suggested that a better name might be found. For instance would not the name of "National Reserve" do very well? He had put down in his Amendment "National Guard," but he quite admitted that it rather suggested the French Revolution. It was, however, certainly a better name than the one which had been chosen.

Amendment moved—

"In page 25, line 21, to leave out the word 'Territorial' and insert the words 'National Guard.'"—(*Lord Montagu of Beaulieu.*)

*THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH asked whether it was really necessary for the House to sit up to that hour of the night to consider what would be the best name to use. It seemed to him that they might just as well leave in the words "Territorial Force," as substitute any others, because probably, whatever name was chosen for the force, the public or the soldiers themselves would give it a very much better name.

THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE said it seemed to him that it would be a great pity if the House made it impossible for the Force to be called "Haldane's Terriers."

LORD MONTAGU OF BEAULIEU considered it important to start with a good name, and he was sure that "Territorial Army" was not a good name.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Schedule to the Bill agreed to.

Preamble of the Bill agreed to.

The Title :—

LORD MONTAGU OF BEAULIEU, who had proposed to substitute "An Army for National Defence" for "Territorial Force," said that this was practically the same point as he had raised on Clause 38. Perhaps the Government would consider whether they could find a word which would define the Territorial Army better than the words they had now got. He left the matter to them to consider.

Title agreed to.

Bill reported to the House, with Amendments.

Standing Committee negatived. The Report of Amendments to be received on Thursday, the 18th instant; and Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 102.)

House adjourned at a quarter before Twelve o'clock, till To-morrow, at a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 9th July, 1907.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

United Methodist Church Bill [Lords].—As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 12) Bill; Local Government Provisional Order (No. 15) Bill.—Read the third time, and passed.

Dundee Corporation Order Confirmation Bill [Lords].—Considered; to be read the third time upon Thursday.

Tynemouth Corporation Water Bill [Lords].—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Great Yarmouth Waterworks and Lowestoft Water and Gas Bill [Lords].—reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Standing Orders.—Resolution reported from the Select Committee :—"That, in the case of the Broadstairs and St. Peter's Urban District Water Bill [Lords] the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with :—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill."

Resolution agreed to.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to :—Great Northern and City Railway Bill, with an Amendment; Great Central Railway Bill, with Amendments.

Amendments to :—Southend Water Bil [Lords]; Burnham (Somerset) Pier Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to provide for the union of the parishes in the City of London into one parish, and to make better provision for the local government of the said city; and for other purposes." [City of London (Union of Parishes) Bill [Lords.]

City of London (Union of Parishes) Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petition from Oxford, against; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Copy presented, of Code of Regulations for Public Elementary Schools in Wales including Monmouthshire, with Schedules, 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3852 to 3855 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

COLONIES.

Copy presented of Papers relating to the Brussels Sugar Convention [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

COUNTY COURTS (PLAINTS AND SITTINGS).

Address for "Returns from every County Court in England and Wales of the total number of Plaints, etc., entered in each County Court from the 1st day of January to the 31st day of December 1906, both days inclusive, distinguishing those not exceeding £20, those above £20 and not exceeding £50, those above £50 and not exceeding £100, and those by agreement over £100."

"And, of the Sitttings of the County Courts in England and Wales holden before the Judges of such Courts in the year 1906 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper No. 255, of Session 1906)."—(*Mr. Herbert Samuel.*)

UNITED KINGDOM (TRADE, COMMERCE, AND CONDITION OF PEOPLE).

Return ordered, "for the United Kingdom for each of the years 1831, 1841, 1851, 1861, 1871, 1881, 1891, 1901, and 1906, showing the following particulars so far as available:—(1) population (millions); (2) death rate per thousand; (3) birth rate per thousand; (4) paupers, total average number, indoor and outdoor; (5) number of paupers per 10,000 of the population; (6) total cost of poor relief; (7) net passenger movement outwards to places out of Europe; (8) average Gazette price per quarter of wheat, barley, and oats; (9) average price of beef at the Metropolitan Cattle Market; (10) total value of the imports of grain, corn, and flour; (11) total value of the imports of meat, alive and dead; (12) total value of the imports of food and drink (exclusive of tobacco); (13) total value of the imports of food and drink (exclusive of tobacco) from British Colonies and Possessions; (14) total value of the imports of food and drink (exclusive of tobacco) per head of population; (15) total quantity of home-grown and imported wheat and wheat-flour retained for home consumption; (16) consumption of wheat and wheat-flour per head of population; (17) value of fish of British taking landed on the coats of the United Kingdom; (18) net imports of merchandise (deducting re-exports), total value and value per head of population; (19) exports of the produce and manufactures of the United Kingdom, total value and value per head of the population; (20) imports of bullion and specie; (21) exports of bullion and specie; (22) income-tax, yield of each penny; (23) amount standing to credit of depositors in Post Office and Trustee Savings Banks; (24) total registered tonnage of British shipping; (25) tonnage of British shipping entered and cleared in the Foreign trade at ports in the United Kingdom; (26) tonnage of Foreign shipping entered and cleared in the Foreign trade at ports in the United Kingdom; and (27) total clearings at the London Bankers' Clearing House."—(*Mr. Essex.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Carriage of English Mails from Egypt by French Boats.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether letters, newspapers, books, and parcels despatched from Egypt to an address in the United Kingdom are carried by the French mail boats running between Marseilles and Egyptian ports; and, if not, will he say why this is not done.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton*). Mails containing correspondence for the United Kingdom are despatched from Egypt by the French mail packets for Marseilles, but those vessels do not convey parcel mails for this country. The Egyptian Post Office makes its own arrangements for the conveyance of its mails, and doubtless considers the parcel post traffic to be sufficiently provided for by sending mails twice a week by way of Brindisi and once a week by the direct sea route to the Thames.

Extension of Hours of Post Office Savings Banks for the Benefit of Provident Societies.

MR. HORNIMAN (Chelsea): To ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to the desire of many provident societies and clubs to be allowed to deposit funds received by them on the same night as collected, up to ten o'clock, at district offices where other postal business is transacted up to that hour; and whether he can arrange for this to be done at specified offices, so removing temptation and advancing the cause of thrift.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) If the arrangement suggested by the hon. Member were made it could not be confined to friendly societies; nor if deposits were received could payment of withdrawals be refused. I fear that it would not be possible to extend what would practically be Savings Bank business after 8 p.m. Offices in which business is carried on after 8 p.m. are kept open chiefly for those who desire to post letters for the latest collections; and, as a rule, only the simple business of selling stamps and postal orders is transacted. The officer in charge, therefore, may be only a junior clerk; and such an officer would not necessarily have sufficient experience to be employed on Savings Bank work. Further, the proposal would involve the accumulation of large sums of money at the post office which could not be remitted the same night. Thus a grave additional responsibility for its custody would be thrown on the postmaster. This would be especially the case if the deposits are made on Saturday nights. I would point out that formerly the closing hour for Savings Bank business was 6 p.m., and in some cases 4 p.m., so that the present closing is in itself an extension of time. It should also be remembered that the ordinary hours of closing in banking businesses is 4 p.m. I especially regret to be unable to meet the wishes of the hon. Member, and I am anxious that all reasonable facilities shall be given to friendly societies.

Working of the Chancery Registrar's Office—Report of Committee.

MR. STEWART-SMITH (Westmoreland, Kendal): To ask Mr. Attorney-General whether the Committee appointed to inquire into the working of the Chancery Registrar's Office has reported; and whether it is proposed to publish the Report.

(*Answered by Sir John Walton.*) The inquiry is entirely departmental, and it is not intended to publish any Report.

Working of the Irish Land Act—Appointments of Staff.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that only land sales effected to the end of the year 1904 have been completed and paid for, and that the Estates Commissioners are two and a half years in arrears of work in their Department; is he aware that, some months ago, the Estates Commissioners, to fill an appointment in their offices that they considered necessary for the administration of the Land Act, selected a candidate possessing special qualifications, and submitted his name to the Treasury, who refused their sanction, stating that the same should be made through the Civil Service Commissioners; is it necessary, when the

Estates Commissioners can obtain the services of an efficient person for work of a special character, that such person can only be appointed through the Civil Service Commissioners, and has this been the rule since the Act came into operation; are there any instances where persons were appointed directly to special clerical appointments by the Estates Commissioners without going through the hands of the Civil Service Commissioners; and, if the name of the candidate in question is again submitted by the Estates Commissioners, will the Treasury re-consider their decision as to his appointment.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The statement in the first part of the Question is somewhat inaccurate. The Estates Commissioners are at present making advances in respect of applications received in April, 1905. A comparatively small number of cases in which the applications were lodged prior to that date are still outstanding, and the delay in these cases is due simply to undischarged questions of title and such matters. The Commissioners inform me that there is no foundation whatever for the statement made in the second part of the Question. Appointments in the Estates Commissioners' office are made under Section 23 (9) of the Act of 1903, and it has been decided that for clerical work the staff shall be supplied by the Civil Service Commissioners. The Estates Commissioners have no knowledge of any such candidate as is referred to in the Question. They have not submitted to the Treasury the name of any candidate whose appointment has been refused.

Sugar Prices.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): To ask the President of the Board of Trade what was the average price of raw and refined sugar, respectively, imported into England from 1893 to 1902, and what was the price of raw and refined sugar respectively, in this country in 1906; and what was the importation of sugar into this country in 1902 and 1906, respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*)—

Statement showing the total Imports of Unrefined and Refined Sugar into the United Kingdom in each of the years 1893–1906, inclusive, and the Average Declared Value (exclusive of Duty) of such Imports.

Years.	Total imports of sugar.		Average declared value of imported sugar.	
	Unrefined.	Refined.	Unrefined.	Refined.
	Cwts.	Cwts.	Shillings per cwt.	Shillings per cwt.
1893 - -	16,032,113	11,550,540	14·30	18·36
1894 - -	14,306,004	13,944,792	11·67	15·52
1895 - -	17,009,997	14,145,143	9·73	13·30
1896 - -	15,743,676	14,776,929	10·59	13·58
1897 - -	13,553,527	15,830,759	9·18	12·29
1898 - -	14,692,906	16,520,254	9·60	12·31
1899 - -	13,121,709	17,809,121	10·47	12·57
1900 - -	13,234,932	19,248,187	10·45	12·82
1901 - -	13,387,143	21,256,846	9·53	12·18
1902 - -	13,221,492	18,365,417	7·62	10·56
1903 - -	12,648,679	18,588,720	8·69	10·72
1904 - -	14,683,940	17,605,503	10·17	12·26
1905 - -	14,656,648	14,695,801	11·66	14·85
1906 - -	15,257,886	18,096,163	8·96	11·56

Visit of the Crofters Commission to Orkney.

Mr. COCHRANE (Ayrshire, N.): To ask the Secretary for Scotland how often the Crofters' Commission have visited Orkney in the past six years; and whether any applications for the reduction of rents and for compensation for improvements still remain unsettled.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) The Commissioners as a body have not been in Orkney since July, 1901, but in November, 1904, they made a remit to a valuer to inspect certain subjects then awaiting disposal and report on the same. The total number of fair-rent applications at present awaiting disposal is twenty-six, including two under appeal; and the number of compensation cases is seven, including three under appeal to the three Commissioners under the Delegation of Powers Act, 1888.

Transfer to Crown of East India Company—Promotion of Company's Military Officers.

Sir W. J. COLLINS (St. Pancras, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether, on the transfer of the East India Company to the Crown, the military officers in the Company's service were, by Sections 56 and 58 of 21 and 22 Vic., c. 106, guaranteed promotion as if they had continued in the service of the company; whether promotion under the company was not by seniority; whether promotion in accordance with the practice obtaining under the company was continued from 1858 to 1893; whether such promotion has now ceased, and why; and whether the case of those officers on the unemployed supernumerary list who have not received promotion such as they would have received under the company will be reconsidered during the current year.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) The Answer to the first Question is in the affirmative; to the second, that promotion in the East India Company's army was by seniority, but subject to regulation by the Sovereign in respect to promotion above the rank of colonel. With regard to the further Questions I must refer my hon. friend to my Answer to his Question of November 26th, 1906.† I regret that I do not see my way to reopen the question of the promotion of officers on the unemployed supernumerary list.

Postal Arrangements at Monknewtown, County Meath.

Mr. PATRICK WHITE (Meath, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will improve the postal arrangements for Monknewtown, Slane, county Meath, so that the inhabitants may receive their letters before three o'clock in the afternoon.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I will make inquiry on the subject, and will communicate my decision to the hon. Member in due course.

Accounts of the Chancery Suitors' Fund.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, seeing that the Comptroller and Auditor General keeps, at the head office of the Exchequer and Audit Department, duplicate records of payments on accounts other than the Chancery Suitors' Fund Account, he will now furnish a full statement, showing the various accounts on which such duplicate records are kept.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) I am at a loss to understand this further Question in view of the explicit Answer which I gave to the hon. Member on the 13th ultimo, namely, that duplicate records are not kept except in the case of the accounts of the Chancery Suitors' Fund. The purport of the hon. Member's Questions relating to the methods of audit adopted by the Comptroller and Auditor-General is not clear, but if he is of opinion that the absence of a permanent local staff to conduct the audit of Irish accounts in Ireland results in duplication of work I am informed that the impression is entirely erroneous.

Inspector of Waterguard, Customs Service.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the new scheme for the amalgamation of the Customs and Coastguards was framed with a view to the appointment of Commander Parry, brother to the deputy chairman of the Customs Board, to the post of chief inspector of waterguard; will he explain why this gentleman did not get the position; and why the new scheme was not abandoned when it was found impracticable to give him the appointment.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clxv., 1215.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) There is no post of chief inspector of waterguard in the Customs service, but there is an inspector of the London waterguard, and this is, doubtless, the post to which the hon. Member refers. It has been filled by the appointment of a commander in the Royal Navy, specially selected about a year ago by the Admiralty at the request of the Board of Customs and with the approval of the Treasury; and as I have already stated in the House, during the debate on the Customs Estimates on May 16th, this appointment has nothing whatever to do with any proposal for amalgamating the Coastguard with the Customs. There is no foundation whatever for the suggestion respecting Captain Parry contained in this Question; and I cannot but regret that in these circumstances it should have been made.

Salaries and Duties of Assistant Clerks in the Exchequer and Audit Department.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether abstractors, assistant clerks, in the Exchequer and Audit Department are now employed on work lately performed by Second Division clerks; and whether the actual salaries now being received by these abstractors are much less than the actual salaries at present given to nominated messengers who serve in this Department.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) At the recent reorganisation of the Exchequer and Audit Department a limited number of assistant clerks (abstractors) were introduced in lieu of Second Division clerks to perform, under careful supervision, the routine work connected with the keeping of duplicate records of the Chancery Suitors Fund (England). The salaries of the assistant clerks so employed are on the scale in force for their grade throughout the Civil Service.

Secretary to the Board of Customs — Retention beyond Sixty-five Years of Age.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether it is contemplated by the Board of Customs to retain the services of the secretary to the Board beyond the age of sixty-five; and, if so, whether, seeing that there are competent and qualified men of long service in the Customs capable of performing the duties of this post, he will override the recommendation of the Customs permanent officials and compel this gentleman to retire when he reaches the usual maximum age limit.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) The answer to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative. I explained the reason for this officer's retention in answer to a Question by my hon. and gallant friend the Member for the Abercromby Division of Liverpool on the 13th ultimo.†

Irish Land Purchase Act, 1891.

Mr. HAMMOND (Carlow): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury when regulations will be made to render Section 2 of The Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act, 1891, effective.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) I may observe that the section in question has, of course, no application to advances under The Irish Land Act, 1903, but only to advances under the earlier Land Acts made in the form of Guaranteed Land Stock. So far as regards the payment of one-quarter of the annuity in stock, I find, after communication with the Departments administering the Acts, that it would be impracticable to allow payment to be made in this way. It appears that the tenant-purchaser who benefited by paying the one-quarter in stock would obtain that benefit at the expense of other tenant-purchasers who paid in cash. The amount of stock obtainable is too small to enable all tenant-purchasers to pay the one-quarter in stock, and it would not be fair to allow the advantage to a few. So far as regards the redemption of the annuity or a part thereof, while it is not possible to make any rule that would be operative for the purpose of enabling the transfer of stock to be made through the Post Office Savings Bank, the National Debt Commissioners are prepared to accept, and have in fact accepted, Guaranteed Land

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† See (4) *Debates*, clxxv., 1596.

Stock when tendered to them. No new rule is required for this purpose, and in the circumstances the Treasury does not propose to issue any rule under the section referred to.

Poor Relief Expenditure.

MR. SUMMERBELL (Sunderland): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to a Return (1906, No. 315) to an order of this House for a statement of the amount expended by boards of guardians for poor relief, 1906; whether he is aware that this Return, while giving the total amount spent by all the boards combined, without omission, only gives for each board the cost of poor relief, omitting salaries, rations and superannuation allowances of officers and servants, loan charges, expenditure on furniture, buildings and repairs, rents, rates, taxes, insurance, and certain establishment charges; and, seeing that the omitted items form more than half the cost of poor relief, whether, in the next published half-yearly Return, the Local Government Board will give the true cost of poor relief in each union.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) I am aware that the particulars given by the Return are those referred to by my hon. friend. For many years these Returns only contained statements as to the amounts expended in respect of in-maintenance and outdoor relief. Latterly the total expenditure of boards of guardians connected with the relief of the poor has been included; but it does not seem necessary to give this information half-yearly as respects each Poor Law union. It is given annually in the Local Taxation Returns.

MR. SUMMERBELL: To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called at page 456 of Appendix III. of the 35th Annual Report of the Local Government Board to the table given by Mr. Hervey as part of his Report; whether the title, in-relief, of one of the columns means in-maintenance or in-relief, including salaries and other charges; whether, at page 507 of the same Report, Mr. P. Bagenal is using the expression indoor relief as including salaries and other charges, or whether he means in-maintenance only; and, if so, whether he could give instructions to Local Government Board officials not to use the words in-relief in documents intended for publication when they only mean the cost of in-maintenance.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) The expressions in the Reports of these inspectors in relation to indoor relief are intended to refer to in-maintenance, and the figures given do not include salaries, etc., either as regards indoor or outdoor relief. I will draw the attention of the inspectors in question to the point suggested.

Belfast Wax Candles—Alleged Infringement of Trade Mark.

MR. J. DEVLIN (Belfast, W.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the placing on the market of imitations of Belfast-made wax candles by English firms for the purpose of deceiving customers, and to the injury to Irish trade resulting therefrom; and what action he proposes to take in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) The hon. Member recently called the attention of the Board of Trade to a case of this kind, but I understand the Belfast manufacturer whose trade mark was infringed has received an assurance from the English firm that the practice complained of will be discontinued. The case is one in which the aggrieved manufacturer has an adequate legal remedy under the Merchandise Marks Act, and no action on the part of the Board of Trade would seem to be necessary. If there are any other cases which the hon. Member has in mind, the Board of Trade will be happy to consider them if he will be good enough to supply particulars.

Miners Eight Hours Bill.

MR. GLOVER (St. Helens): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can name the date when he will introduce the Miners Eight Hours Bill.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I hope, as I said in reply to a similar Question yesterday, to introduce this

Bill in the course of next week, but I am not yet in a position to make a definite statement.

Treatment of Consumptive Patients at the Forster Green Hospital Belfast.

MR. J. DEVLIN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the decision of the Belfast Corporation sanctioning an arrangement for ten years with the committee of management of the Forster Green Hospital for Consumption, under which arrangement the hospital authorities are to reserve twenty-five beds for patients nominated by the Corporation and approved as suitable by the medical superintendent of the hospital, the Corporation to pay the sum of 35s. per week per bed and two members of the Corporation to be on the board of governors of the hospital; whether he is aware that the Forster Green Hospital is situated in a hollow and was built and equipped over thirty years ago, before the value of an elevated situation and open-air treatment for consumption became recognised by the best authorities on the disease, and at the present time is quite unsuitable for the treatment of tuberculous patients; whether he is aware that the sum agreed upon is 10s. per bed per week in excess of that which was the basis of negotiations between the parties in 1903, and that the opinion of an expert taken by the Corporation on the Forster Green Hospital and site was suppressed by the Corporation Public Health Committee, despite the appeals of several councillors for its publication; and whether, seeing that it is estimated that the cost of establishing a municipal consumptive hospital for Belfast on a suitable site, and equipped in a thoroughly up-to-date manner for twenty-five patients, would be £12,500, which would be cheaper than the present arrangement, and that the present arrangement is part of a scheme to help the Forster Green Hospital until the sum of £40,000, on the subscription of which a large bequest is contingent, is forthcoming, and that the death rate from consumption in Belfast is exceptionally high, and seeing that the present arrangement is opposed to the public interest, he will refuse to sanction it, and order an inquiry into the whole question.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Local Government Board have received an application from the Belfast Corporation for sanction to an arrangement with the committee of the Forster Green Hospital on the terms indicated in the first part of the Question. A protest has been made to the Board on substantially the same grounds of objection as are recited in the Question, and the matter is at present under the Board's consideration.

Safety of Longmoor Range, Hampshire.

MR. HERBERT (Buckinghamshire, Wycombe): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that a man named Robert Luff, while working upon private lands on 5th July behind the range at Longmoor, Hampshire, was shot in the head; and whether he will cause inquiry to be made into the circumstances and see that precautions are taken to safeguard the public from similar accidents in future.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) No report of this matter has been received in the War Office, but inquiries are being made from the General Officer Commanding concerned.

Housing of the Working Classes.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston): To ask the Prime Minister whether, in consideration of the fact that the Select Committee appointed last year to consider the question of housing reported in December last, and also that a Bill was promised in the King's Speech on the opening of Parliament this year, he can give some assurance that a measure for the better housing of the working classes will be included in the programme for next session.

(*Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*) His Majesty's Government are fully alive to the importance of this question, and my right hon. friend may be assured that it is their intention to introduce legislation dealing with the better housing of the working classes at the earliest practicable moment. I may add that no effort on their part will be wanting to frame a measure which shall be adequate to the necessities of the case.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Royal Navy—Report on Engineers and Marines.

MR. BONAR LAW (Camberwell, Dulwich): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can now state if it is the intention of the Admiralty to publish in full both the majority and the minority Reports of the Committee on the engineering branch of the Royal Navy and the officers of the Royal Marines, and also the observations of the President of the Committee and the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty on the minority Report, as well as the evidence taken before the Committee.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): This Report is still under consideration. As the Committee was appointed for the confidential guidance of the Board in contingencies which have not yet arisen, it is not proposed to publish the Report.

Manning of the Navy.

MR. HUNT (Shropshire, Ludlow): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state how the number of men now in the British Navy compares with the number in 1904–5.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The number of officers, seamen and boys, coastguard, and Royal Marines now borne is approximately 127,030. The average number borne during the year 1904–5 was 130,490.

Nucleus Crews.

MR. HUNT: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether there are now twelve battleships and eight cruisers laid up with skeleton crews; and, if so, how long it would take to make these vessels serviceable after the outbreak of war.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: There are at present eleven battleships and ten cruisers with reduced nucleus crews ready for sea at five days notice. They are in a better state of preparedness for war than were the twenty-one battleships and twenty-five cruisers of the Fleet Reserve in August, 1904, before the nucleus crew system was introduced.

MR. HUNT: Can the right hon. Gentleman say what number of men form the nucleus crew in this case?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I cannot say without notice, but I should think seventy or eighty.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): Are these ships and cruisers in need of repairs?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I should think so.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): When are we going to war?

Strength of Sea-Going Squadrons.

MR. HUNT: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the sea-going squadrons of the British Navy now contain seven battleships and six cruisers less than in 1906; and, if so, on what does the First Lord of the Admiralty base his assertion that the British Navy is now as strong as or stronger than ever.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The reply is in the negative. The sea-going squadrons, including the Nore Division of the Home Fleet, contain one battleship less and two armoured cruisers more than in 1906.

The Channel Fleet.

MR. HUNT: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the sea-going squadron of the Channel Fleet now contains three battleships, two armoured cruisers, two protected cruisers, three scouts, and thirty-six destroyers less than last year.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The Answer is in the affirmative except that the "Tyne" is a depot ship and not a protected cruiser. Corresponding numbers of vessels of the types named with full crews have been transferred to the Home Fleet.

*MR. HUNT asked if a fleet without torpedo boats was not like an army without an advance guard.

[No Answer was returned.]

Naval Armaments

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, with reference to the naval programmes of 1907–8, whether he is aware that the Return of Fleets just issued credits Germany with a programme of three armoured vessels carrying thirty-eight to forty-four heavy guns, as compared with our programme of three armoured vessels carrying thirty heavy guns; whether he is aware that in addition the German programmes for two years have exceeded those introduced by the present Government in respect of cruisers and destroyers by three protected cruisers and seventeen destroyers; and whether, with the settlement of the question of the arrest of armaments on the conclusion of the Hague Conference, these facts will be taken into immediate consideration.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The figures quoted by the hon. Member are well known to the Admiralty, and will be considered at the proper time.

Naval Construction.

MR. BELLAIRS: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware that the new Return of Fleets credits the two German battleships of the 1906–7 programme with fourteen to sixteen 11-inch guns each, making a total increase of twelve to sixteen heavy guns beyond the figures given to the House in last year's Return issued in May, 1906; and whether, in view of this increase, representing the heavy-gun armament of three to four German battleships of the 1905–6 type, he can state if provision was made to meet it in the programme of this year.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The Admiralty are satisfied that the provision made for new construction is sufficient.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Cannot the Admiralty so arrange their programme in the future as to ensure that the British Navy will be strong enough to meet the combined navies of all the civilised Powers—European, American, and Asiatic?

[No Answer was returned.]

Chatham Dockyard Approaches.

MR. FELL (Greath Yarmouth): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if the dredging to be carried out at Sheerness is to be continued in the Medway until ships of the draught of the "Dreadnought" can be docked at Chatham and similar ships can be built in that dockyard.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: There is no intention at present of dredging anything except the Sheerness Bar.

MR. JENKINS (Chatham) asked whether it was not the fact that at present ships of the draught of the "Dreadnought" could be safely navigated up the Medway and docked at Chatham.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I do not say the hon. Gentleman is wrong, but he should give notice of the Question.

Home Fleet—Devonport Division.

MR. NIELD (Middlesex, Ealing): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, having regard to the fact that the battleships "Cæsar," "Mars," and "Hannibal," constituting the Devonport Division of the Home Fleet, have been temporarily attached to the Channel and Atlantic Fleets pending repairs to the "Exmouth," "Commonwealth," and "Dominion," these ships have in turn been replaced; and, if so, whether the ships replacing them have had their crews increased to the minimum of three-fifths of their full complement.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Ships in the Home Fleet at Portsmonth and Devonport are not replaced while they are themselves replacing ships in the Nore Division or in other Fleets.

Woolwich Arsenal Discharges.

MR. COWAN (Surrey, Guildford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in carrying out necessary discharges at the Woolwich Arsenal, account can be taken of the length of service of those employed; and whether, in this connection, ex-soldiers and ex-sailors will be allowed to reckon their time of service in the Arsenal from the date of their enlistment as soldiers or sailors.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): Account is always taken of length of service as the main factor in determining discharges, but there are so many other circumstances which in justice to the men, and in the interests of the Arsenal, must also be considered, that I cannot undertake that previous service in the Army or Navy shall be recognised as a chief or determining factor when the relative claims of different workmen are being decided upon. I may add that men with previous Army or Navy service are, wherever possible, given a preference when entering the Ordnance Factories.

The Imprisoned Indian Agitators.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the friends of the persons recently arrested and deported without trial in India are allowed to communicate with them or their relatives to see them at any time.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. MORLEY, Montrose Burghs): Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh are allowed to correspond with their friends, but their correspondence is examined to prevent messages being sent that might give rise to disturbances. So far one letter only has been stopped. My information is that no one has expressed a desire to see the prisoners; but there would, I presume, be no objection to their doing so under such supervision as would ensure that undesirable communications could not pass.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND asked if the same facilities would be granted to these prisoners as were given to Irish political prisoners in Kilmainham.

MR. MORLEY replied that it was a long time ago, but, so far as he could remember, there were no political prisoners in Kilmainham during the time he was responsible for the Government of Ireland.

*MR. MACKARNESS (Berkshire, Newbury): Will Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh be allowed to communicate with their legal advisers?

MR. MORLEY: I presume so.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Cannot the right hon. Gentleman see his way to have these prisoners detained in some place not so great a distance away from their friends?

MR. MORLEY: I am afraid the effect of so doing would be to impair the effect of the precautionary measures.

Indian Gold Standard Reserve.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON (Hythe): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India what is the present position of the Gold Standard Reserve; and whether he intends to continue indefinitely the practice of adding to it the whole of the profit on coinage.

MR. MORLEY: Up to 31st March, 1907, £12,518,513 derived from the profit on coinage and from interest had been invested in British Government securities on behalf of the Gold Standard Reserve and £4,000,000 was held in rupees in India. The profit to be realised on coinage in 1907-8 will, it is anticipated, be considerable, though the exact sum cannot of course be stated at present. In view of the amount of the reserve and of the large stock of gold (about £10,500,000) held by the Government of India and the Secretary of State in Council in the paper currency department and elsewhere, I have decided that the present practice of adding to the reserve the whole of the profit on coinage and of the interest on securities already purchased may be modified. From the present year and until the reserve reaches £20,000,000 one half of the profit on coinage together with the interest on securities will be added to the reserve, and the other half of the profit will be use to supplement the funds available for capital expenditure on Indian railways. This decision, which is based on a recommendation made by the Departmental Committee on Indian Railways, has enabled me to sanction an addition of £1,000,000 to the programme of capital expenditure for the present year. The additional expenditure will be devoted to improving the equipment of open lines.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON: What amount will be available for increased railway expenditure?

MR. MORLEY: I cannot say off-hand.

Unrest in India.

*MR. MACKARNESS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is now in a position to make any statement as to the effect produced by the measures taken to allay the unrest in the Punjab; and how long or to what extent it is necessary to continue them.

MR. MORLEY: The proceedings under the regulation of 1818 are generally recognised as having had a most salutary effect in the Punjab. The prohibition of seditious meetings under the Ordinance of 11th May has prevented the spread of disorder in the Punjab and has allayed excitement there. But it would be premature to say that the state of feeling gives no ground for anxiety. I can only say that we have no intention of continuing measures referred to a day longer than the circumstances require, but so long as in our judgment circumstances require it they will be maintained. I may remind my hon. and learned friend that the Ordinance has legal effect only for six months from 11th May. If the Government of India wish to continue it, they will have to legislate in the ordinary way.

*MR. MACKARNESS asked whether the prisoners had availed themselves of the right under the Ordinance of making known to the Government any defence or statement they wished to make.

MR. MORLEY: No, Sir, they have not.

*MR. MACKARNESS: Are they aware they have the right?

MR. MORLEY: I presume so; one of the prisoners is himself a very competent lawyer.

Calcutta Police and the Press.

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON (Northumberland, Tyneside): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that the Government of Bengal are paying out of public funds, the entire costs of the plaintiff in the suit of Hem Chunder Lahiri *v.* the Editor and publisher of the Indian *Daily News*, recently under trial upon the civil original side of the High Court of Calcutta, and that official correspondence to that effect has been published in Calcutta by the Government of Bengal; whether he is aware that the suit in question is one of several which are being brought by an inspector of the Calcutta police force against a number of Calcutta newspapers, both Indian and Anglo-Indian, for damages in respect of an alleged libel published by them in July, 1905, in connection with the abortive police prosecution of one Ganga Ahir for murder; whether the conduct of this inspector and of other members of the Calcutta police force in reference to this prosecution was at the time condemned in strong terms by the present Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal; and, if so, what is the reason for the action now being taken by the Government of Bengal, and why are public moneys being expended on behalf of one of the parties to a private action at law?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): I have seen a report in the newspapers that the Government of Bengal are bearing part of the costs of the plaintiff, who is an inspector of police. I have no official information as to the details of the case to which my hon. friend refers. The action of the Bengal Government is apparently in entire accordance with the rules laid down by the Government of India for the conduct of Government servants, which provide that when a Government servant, with the previous sanction of Government, has recourse to the Courts for the vindication of his public acts or character against defamation, the Government shall decide whether it will bear his costs itself, or reimburse him if the decision is in his favour.

Colonies and the Sugar Bounties.

MR. C. E. PRICE (Edinburgh, Central): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any of the Colonies in the British Empire give a bounty upon any kind or quality of sugar; and, if so, what is the amount of the bounty so given, and by which of the Colonies.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): No bounties are given in any of the Crown Colonies. With regard to the Colonies possessing responsible government, the bounties which, as estimated by the Permanent Sugar Commission, are given in those Colonies, with the calculations upon which those estimates are based, will be found stated in the Papers (C. 2094) relating to the Sugar Convention, which were laid before Parliament in June, 1904.

Orange River Farm Revaluation.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the revaluation of the farms held by settlers in the Orange River Colony will take place before the new Government assumes administration.

MR. CHURCHILL: No general revaluation is contemplated, but legislation in the Colony is proposed which will render easier the position of any settlers who find temporary difficulty in making their payments to the Government.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: Have the Government received any complaints with regard to the valuation, and, if so, do they intend to take any action?

MR. CHURCHILL: Any such complaints would, of course, go to the local Government. I am not aware of any number having been received. I understand the valuation has been found to be acceptable on the whole.

Lagos Mahogany Timber Concession.

MR. ALDEN (Middlesex, Tottenham): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware of the fact that Mr. Brown, a European at Ijebu Ode, Lagos, South Nigeria, has obtained a concession to some 600 square miles of territory from Awujale, the King of Ijebu Ode, for the purpose of cutting mahogany logs; that Awujale and the chiefs repudiate the claim on the ground that the document signed by them merely conceded the right to prospect for timber, with the option after six months of entering into an agreement for cutting rights; that the only money which has passed between the parties is the sum of £20, which was considered to be a return for the hospitality extended to Mr. Brown by Awujale and the chiefs; and whether, seeing that as a result of this alleged concession the natives, who previously had received licences to cut logs, were deprived of this privilege and of their livelihood, while the timber which had already been cut was confiscated, and that at the same time several of the natives were imprisoned for disputing the right of Mr. Brown over this area of timber land, he will cause inquiry to be made into all the circumstances of this case, and order the immediate release of the natives and the restoration of their property.

MR. CHURCHILL: The Secretary of State has no detailed information on this subject, but a full report has been called for by telegraph.

MR. ALDEN: Will the right hon. Gentleman receive a deputation on the subject?

MR. CHURCHILL: I shall be willing to hear anything my hon. friend has to say.

Chinese Conservancy Works.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Chinese Government undertook to meet the expenses of the conservancy works on the River Huangpu and the bar at Woosung by an annual grant of 460,000 taels, for the provision of which the entire opium revenues of Tsuchuan and Suchow were earmarked; what provision, if any, has been made, since the issue of the edict prohibiting the opium traffic, for the continuance of the grant; and whether the completion of the work is regarded by His Majesty's Government as assured.

SIR EDWARD GREY: The reply to the first part is in the affirmative. The Chinese Government have not, since the promulgation of the opium decree, proposed to furnish any additional security for the purpose named, but it must be borne in mind that ten years have been allowed for the extinction of the traffic, and that meanwhile the revenue is being collected. Moreover, in the agreement between China and the Powers on the subject it is stipulated that if the security mentioned by the hon. Member becomes insufficient she must provide the balance from other sources. The latest Report (that for the September Quarter of 1906) that has been received shows that a satisfactory beginning has been made with the work, and I have so far no reason to doubt that it will be completed in due time.

Egyptian Government Officials Salaries.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in view of the fact that many native functionaries and employees of the Egyptian Government are paid small salaries, he will instruct the British agent at Cairo to advise that, if those salaries cannot be raised, the Government should withdraw the decree of the Council of Ministers of 19th March, 1906, prohibiting such functionaries or employees from working for private individuals in their own time without the written consent of the Minister to whom they are attached.

SIR EDWARD GREY: This is a matter of administrative detail in which His Majesty's Government will not interfere with the Egyptian Government. The Egyptian Government cannot be expected to give up the discretion which it now exercises as to increase of expenditure. I assume that there was good reason for the rule referred to in the last part of the Question; it appears to be elastic, and I am not aware that in practice hardship results from it.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Is it not rather hard that these people are to eke out a wretched pittance while the nation is giving Lord Cromer a big subsidy?

[No Answer was returned.]

Macedonian Judicial Reforms.

MR. G. GREENWOOD (Peterborough): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has yet received the Austro-Russian proposals for judicial reform in Macedonia, announced last autumn as being in preparation; and, if not, whether he will himself make proposals to the Powers with reference to the matter.

SIR EDWARD GREY: The Austro-Hungarian and Russian Governments have promised to submit their proposals for judicial reforms shortly, and I have no reason to suppose that there will be any undue delay in their doing so.

MR. LYNCH (Yorkshire, W.R., Ripon): How long do the Government propose to wait for the proposals?

SIR EDWARD GREY: We have been told by the Austro-Russian Governments that the scheme will be laid in the course of the present summer.

Great Britain and Portugal—Treaties on Native Protection.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if there are any treaties existing between this country and Portugal with reference to the protection of the natives.

SIR EDWARD GREY: There are no treaties in existence between Great Britain and Portugal of the kind referred to.

Labour on the Islands of St. Thomé and Principe.

MR. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he can inquire how many persons are annually sent from the mainland to the Island of St. Thomé to labour on the plantations; and whether any ever return.

SIR EDWARD GREY: The latest statistics show that during the first ten months of 1905, 3,373 labourers entered the islands of San Thomé and Principe, but we have no information as to the numbers entering in the last two months of that year or as to the distribution between the two islands. Under the old regulations no arrangements were made for the repatriation of the labourers, but under the regulations of 1903, which are now in force, this state of things has been changed. The first contracts entered into under these regulations will not expire until next year.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: Have any ever returned?

SIR EDWARD GREY: I am not aware.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON: Does the same condition apply to the Island of Principe?

SIR EDWARD GREY: I will inquire.

Slavery in Portuguese African Territory.

MR. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign

Affairs if, in 1875, the British Government paid £40,000 to Portugal to abolish slavery in her African dominions?

SIR EDWARD GREY: There is no record of such a payment as that indicated having ever been made.

Kaid Sir Harry Maclean.

MR. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he can state what terms are demanded by Raisuli for the release of Kaid Sir H. Maclean?

SIR EDWARD GREY: No terms have as yet been formulated by Raisuli to the Moorish Government, and Sir H. Maclean, in the letters received from him, does not appear to have any knowledge of the demands which Raisuli intends to put forward.

The Denishawi Prisoners.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs how many of the Denishawi prisoners have been released, and how many are still in prison and the terms of their sentences; and whether he is aware that there is a widespread feeling in Egypt for a general amnesty to all these prisoners.

SIR EDWARD GREY: The names of the prisoners and the terms of their sentences are given on page 17 of "Egypt No. 3, 1906." The sentences of imprisonment originally passed on two of the prisoners have now expired. I understand that a petition to the Khedive praying for the release of the prisoners is being circulated for signature in Egypt by the Nationalist paper *El Lewa*. I have no other information on the subject.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Does not the right hon. Gentleman consider that the time has come when the sentences may be revised?

SIR EDWARD GREY: I can add nothing to my Answer.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: On the proposition to make a Grant to Lord Cromer I will raise the question of the continued imprisonment of these people.

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON asked if petitions had not been sent in recently praying for the release of the prisoners.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I assume that is the petition referred to in my Answer.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: How many of these prisoners are there?

SIR EDWARD GREY: I must refer the hon. Member to the document laid before Parliament.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: That is the way to keep it out of the Press.

Post Office Savings Bank Depositors.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that a considerable proportion of the deposits in the Post Office Savings Bank belongs to persons in the well-to-do classes, attracted by a higher rate of interest, including compound interest, than can be obtained outside the Savings Banks for deposits repayable on demand, and this although the deposits in the Savings Banks are guaranteed by the State; and, seeing that the terms on which the business of the Post Office Savings Bank is conducted have resulted in a depreciation in the value of the securities held against the deposits and an annual loss in the income account, such loss amounting for the year 1906 to £119,870, which loss falls on the general taxpayers, does he purpose to take measures to correct this abuse of the Post Office Savings Bank.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.): Inquiries which have been made from time to time do not bear out the conclusion that any large proportion of the deposits in the Post Office Savings Banks belong to classes other than those for whose benefit the Banks were intended. Whatever may have been the case in past years, the present difference between the Savings Banks rate of interest and the rates obtainable elsewhere is not likely to operate unduly to divert moneys to those Banks. I do not think that the terms offered to Savings Banks depositors can be held accountable for the depreciation in the value of Government securities. As regards the deficiency of income

—although it was increased by special causes last year—I am not without hope that it may be very materially reduced in the near future, owing to the more remunerative investments now available for the Fund. And in any case it has to be remembered that from 1861 to 1895 the Post Office Savings Banks business was conducted without any loss of income being incurred, that in the later years of that period the surplus income was paid to the Exchequer, and that on balance the Exchequer has gained more than it has lost in connection with the Post Office Savings Banks.

Depreciation of Post Office Savings Bank Securities.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that, in the years 1894 to 1899, both inclusive, the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt purchased on account of the Post Office Savings Bank £44,996,000 Consols at an average price of £107 14s. 6d. per cent.; that on the 31st December, 1906, the Commissioners held, on account of the Post Office Savings Bank, £59,977,000 Consols at a cost price on balance of £103 0s. 3d. per cent.; that the market price of Consols being at that date about 86 per cent., there was then a depreciation in the value of the Consols so held of £10,000,000; whether his attention has been directed to the definition of a deficiency, in the cognate case of the trustee savings banks, contained in 26 and 27 Vic., c. 25, ss. 6 and 7, and 43 and 44 Vic., c. 36, s. 1; whether there was, in the funds held on account of the Post Office Savings Bank, on the 31st December, 1906, a deficiency within the meaning of 24 and 25 Vic., c. 14, s. 6; and does he purpose to take measures to issue the amount of the deficiency in the manner directed by the Act.

MR. ASQUITH: I understand that the figures quoted by my hon. friend are correct. I must point out, however, that the Consols and other securities held for the Savings Banks Fund are held practically as permanent investments, so that valuations on the basis of the current market price of similar securities are misleading. It was on this ground that the Select Committee of 1902 recommended, and the Savings Banks Act, 1904, directed, the discontinuance of the practice of making and publishing such valuations. Section 6 of the Post Office Savings Banks Act, 1861, to which my hon. friend refers, provides that, if at any time the Post Office Savings Banks Fund is insufficient to meet the lawful claims of all depositors, an issue may be made from the Consolidated Fund of the amount of such deficiency. This is a very important provision, because it ensures to every depositor the satisfaction of his claim by the Consolidated Fund if the Special Fund in the hands of the National Debt Commissioners should at any time prove insufficient. But it is only in the event of the Savings Banks Fund being unable to meet actual claims that the necessity for a Consolidated Fund issue can occur, and I need hardly say that such a contingency has never in fact arisen.

Income Tax on Earned Incomes.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the cost of the Budget concession to earned incomes under £2,000 per annum is estimated to be £1,250,000; whether this sum represents the difference between an income-tax at the rate of 1s. and an income-tax at the rate of 9d. on £100,000,000 of income; whether the earned portions of incomes between £160 and £2,000 are estimated to amount to £200,000,000 per annum; how much of this £200,000,000 is already subject to abatement as forming part of individual incomes of less than £700 each, and is therefore excluded from the new relief; and why no provision is made in his estimate of the cost of the proposed change for the difference between a 1s. and a 9d. tax on so much of the remainder of this £200,000,000 as is in excess of the £100,000,000 referred to above.

MR. ASQUITH: Premising that all estimates of this kind are, from the nature of the case, very largely conjectural, and that in consequence no attempt can be made to give more than very round figures, it may be said: That the earned portion of the aggregate income of persons with total incomes of from £160 to £2,000 per annum may be put at somewhat more than £200,000,000; that, of this amount, rather less than £100,000,000 is already exempt from income-tax by reason of the system of abatements, and is, therefore, in no way affected by the new measure of relief to "earned" incomes; that, in consequence, the amount of incomes affected by the new measure of relief will be in the neighbourhood of £120,000,000, which, at 3d. in the £, will mean a loss of revenue of £1,500,000; and that the figure of £1,500,000 is the estimated loss on the new relief in a full year—the estimate of £1,250,000 being the loss that will fall within the financial year 1907-8.

Sugar Duties.

MR. FELL: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if, so long as the Customs duty on sugar imported into this country is maintained, there will be in effect a protective duty to a similar amount on any sugar which may be manufactured from beet in this country.

MR. ASQUITH: So long as the law remains unaltered there would be no duty on any sugar which might be manufactured from beet in this country. But, if any such manufacture should in fact take place, it would become necessary, in view of our obligations under the Brussels Convention as well as for the protection of the revenue, to impose an excise duty upon sugar manufactured in the United Kingdom.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON: And is not that 5s. over and above the import duty?

MR. ASQUITH asked for notice of the Question.

Depreciated Securities and the Income-Tax.

MR. FELL: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if the considerable sums being applied by banks this half-year out of their profits to replace the sums lost through the depreciation of their holdings of Government securities will be allowed to be deducted before the profits assessable to income-tax are arrived at.

MR. ASQUITH: The Answer is in the negative.

Unclaimed Dividends in Bankruptcy.

MR. PARKER (Halifax): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade what is the amount of money now in hand representing unclaimed creditors' dividends in bankruptcy; and what are the purposes to which these unclaimed dividends are applied.

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (MR. KEARLEY, Devonport): The unclaimed dividends in bankruptcy amount to £752,000 of which £519,000 has been applied to the reduction of the National Debt by the cancellation of stock under the Act 32 and 33 Victoria, cap. 91, and the balance £233,000 has been handed over to the Treasury under the provisions of Section 76 of the Act 46 and 47 Victoria, cap. 52, and is invested as part of the Bankruptcy Funds Account. The dividends on the investments are carried to the Bankruptcy Fees Account, thus operating in aid of the expenses of administration which are otherwise chargeable against the fees on bankruptcy proceedings.

Railway Accidents to Children.

MR. FERENS (Hull, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, in view of the number of serious accidents to children arising from their falling from railway trains, if he will cause railway companies to adopt measures to fasten more securely carriage doors.

MR. KEARLEY: The returns received with regard to the recent accidents referred to appear to show that none of them were attributable to defective fastenings of the doors. The Board of Trade have from time to time recommended the abolition of inside handles, except in the case of suburban trains, but the matter is not one in which they have compulsory powers.

Sugar Prices.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade what was the average price of raw and refined sugar, respectively, imported into England from 1893 to 1902, and what was the price of raw and refined sugar, respectively, in this country in 1906; and what was the importation of sugar into this country in 1902 and 1906, respectively.

MR. KEARLEY: A statement will be printed in the Votes showing the total imports of unrefined and refined sugar into the United Kingdom in each of the years 1893–1906 inclusive and the average declared value (exclusive of duty) of such imports.†

Beet and Cane Sugar Imports.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade what percentage of the total importation of raw sugar in 1900 was represented by beetroot sugar and what percentage by cane sugar; and what proportion of the total importation was represented by beet sugar and cane sugar, respectively, in 1906.

MR. KEARLEY: Imports of unrefined beetroot sugar amounted to 77·4 per cent. of the total imports of unrefined sugar in 1900 and to 72·0 per cent. in 1906. The great bulk of the remainder consisted of cane sugar.

Imports of Russian Sugar.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade what is the world's total production of sugar; how much Russian sugar was imported into this country in 1902, and what is the importation at the present time; and what was the amount of sugar imported from the Argentine in 1902, and how much is imported from the Argentine at the present time.

MR. KEARLEY: The total world's production in the season 1906–7 was estimated at about fourteen million tons. The official statistics do not enable any precise statement to be made as to the amount of the imports into this country of Russian sugar in 1902, much of which came through Germany. The imports from the Argentine in that year amounted to 4,045 tons of unrefined sugar and 350 tons of refined sugar. The importation of sugar from both Russia and the Argentine has been prohibited since 1st September, 1903.

Post Office Officials and the Workmen's Compensation Act.

MR. WILES (Islington, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether the whole of the postal staff will come under the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1906, or whether he proposes to issue a scheme under Clause 2 of the Act.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): It is not proposed to issue a scheme.

Australian Mail Service.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he has any information as to the arrangements made by the Commonwealth Government in reference to the Australian mail service; and what arrangements His Majesty's Government are making for the renewal of the British Australian mail service when the contract now existing expires.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I have no information beyond what has appeared in the public Press as to the arrangements which will be made by the Commonwealth Government for the conveyance of mails to and from Australia. For particulars of the service to be provided by the Imperial Government after the expiration of the current contract with the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company I beg leave to refer the hon. Member to the Answer which I gave to two Questions asked in this House on the 27th of May last.‡

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: When the arrangements are made will they be communicated to the House?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I have no control over them, but if I receive any communication it shall be made to hon. Members.

Tallington School—Appointment of Managers.

MR. DUNN (Cornwall, Camborne): On behalf of the hon. Member for North Northamptonshire, I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether his attention has been called to the deadlock in the management of the council school at Tallington; whether he is aware that the clerk, at the parish meeting in 1903 at which two managers were appointed, having omitted to state in the minutes the length of time for which they were appointed, now holds that such managers were appointed for life or until they may choose to resign, and that these managers having refused to resign the parish is disfranchised; and will he say what steps, if any, he intends to take in this matter.

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† See page 1415–6.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, clxxiv., 1325.

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. LOUGH, Islington, W.): The Board of Education have no power to give a binding decision on points of law arising under the Education Acts except in those cases where the Acts expressly give them power so to do. It appears to the Board, however, as at present advised, that where an authority, in appointing a manager of a provided school, does not impose any condition as to the term of office of the manager so appointed, that manager holds office during the pleasure of the appointing authority. It does not appear to the Board that there are any steps which it is either necessary for them or open to them to take in the present circumstances.

The Public Trustee.

MR. BOTTOMLEY (Hackney, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the salary of the Public Trustee has yet been fixed; if so, at what sum; and under what Vote the House will have an opportunity of discussing it.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. RUNCIMAN, Dewsbury): The Public Trustee will be appointed for five years and will receive a salary of £2,000 a year without title to pension. The form in which Parliament will be asked to vote money for this and the other expenses of carrying the Public Trustee Act, 1906, into effect has not yet been decided. The Act does not come into operation until 1st January, 1908.

Glasgow Gaols.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, College): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether telephones are now installed in Duke Street and Barlinnie Prisons, Glasgow; and, if not, what is the cause of the delay.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): The work is in hand and will be completed in a few days—there has been some delay caused by difficulty in arranging way leaves for the wires.

Indian Budget.

MR. GRETTON (Rutland): I beg to ask the Prime Minister when the debate on the Indian Budget will be resumed.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): I would refer the hon. Member to my Answer to a similar Question on the 7th June.† I have nothing to add to that.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON: Will the Government take no further steps in the matter of getting the Budget passed?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It is little more than a formality.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

Peter Francis Curran, esquire, for the County of Durham (Jarrow Division).

NEW BILLS.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS (CONTRACTS) BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Contracts for the Sale and Purchase of Intoxicating Liquors and to provide for the abolition of tied houses," presented by Mr. Richardson; supported by Mr. Thomas Frederick Richards, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Bell, Mr. Walters, Mr. John Ward, and Mr. Wedgwood Benn; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 23rd July, and to be printed. [Bill 271.]

UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM BILL.

"To make further provision with respect to the University of Durham," presented by Mr. Hills; supported by Sir William Anson, Sir David Brynmor Jones, and Mr. Hudson; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 272.]

UNEMPLOYED WORKMEN.

*MR. J. RAMSAY MACDONALD (Leicester) moved for leave to introduce a Bill to provide work through public authorities for unemployed persons. It was appropriate, he said, to introduce the Bill that day, for the subject had played a considerable part in the election consummated by the ceremony which had just taken place and the taking of his seat by his hon. friend the Member for the Jarrow Division. That the promise made by the Government to deal with the problem of the unemployed had not been redeemed last year was not altogether to be regretted, for until now the full harvest of experience of the Act passed by the late Government had not been reaped. But next year the Act would come to an automatic end, and it was time that any proposed change should be considered. He understood that there were three main reasons why the Government had not introduced a Bill amending the Unemployed Workmen's Act. The first was that the Government proposed to deal with the unemployed in indirect ways, in their land legislation for instance, but while the Government were dealing with the problem in certain indirect ways, they were directly increasing the number of unemployed in other ways, as, for instance, by the Workmen's Compensation Act of last year, which undoubtedly increased potential unemployment. At any rate, they must assume that the unemployed problem was a permanent characteristic of society. The second reason was that a great deal of exaggeration had been made as to the alleged failure of the existing law; and the third was that it was always difficult to frame an Unemployed Bill. The Act passed by the late Government was largely experimental, and, guided by experience, the Bill he now asked leave to introduce began with the registration of the unemployed. County, borough, and urban district councils would be registration authorities, and it would be the duty of these local unemployed authorities to prepare schemes for providing work, such schemes to be subject to the criticism and approval of the Local Government Board. One of the great difficulties in connection with the present Act was not merely that of finding money; that was great, but equally great was the provision of work. Some of those who had had practical experience were inclined to say it was easier to find money than to find employment. One of the reasons was that there was no national initiative. The Local Government Board kept the position of a superior critic; local authorities produced schemes which the Board sometimes criticised adversely and sometimes blessed; but there was no national initiative for producing schemes, no constructive responsibility. The Bill proposed to create a central unemployed committee after the model of the central advisory committee of the Education Act, and to make this committee effective it was proposed to adopt from the Land Bill the clauses creating special commissioners. These commissioners would take the initiative, co-ordinate the work of local authorities, and advise the Local Government Board. Another difficulty had been the constitution of unemployed committees, and it was proposed that local authorities should create committees modelled on those of the old Technical Education Board of the London County Councils. The majority of members would be members of the local unemployed authority, and on the committee would be persons of practical experience and representatives of trade unions and trade councils. One point of interest had relation to the undeserving unemployed, and the Bill provided that the habitual shirker should be compelled to perform reasonable work under the unemployed authority. He hoped it would not again be said that the Labour Party had any sympathy with the loafer and shirker of work who tried to batten and fatten on public funds. As to the finance of the Bill it was proposed that when there was not exceptional distress the expenses might fall on local rates, but in exceptional circumstances money would have to be voted by Parliament. In addition to local schemes for employment, it was proposed that afforestation, national roads, and the reclamation of foreshores and waste lands should be undertaken by the central body, who would have compulsory powers for the acquisition of land. Minor details would be appreciated when Members saw them in the printed Bill.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clxxvi., 171.

Motion made and Question, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to provide work through public authorities for unemployed persons," put, and agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Enoch Edwards, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. Steadman, Mr. Barnes, Mr. Brace, Mr. Nicholls, Mr. George Roberts, Mr. Snowden, Mr. Thorne, and Mr. John Ward.

UNEMPLOYED WORKMEN BILL.

"To provide work through public authorities for unemployed persons," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 273.]

FINANCE BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

Clause 19 agreed to.

Clause 20 :—

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston) moved to amend the words in the clause excepting from its application persons whose remuneration does not exceed the sum for the time being fixed as the limit for the total exemption from income-tax. The Amendment was that the sum of £100 should be substituted. The clause provided that every employer when required to do so by notice from an assessor, should give a return of the incomes of all persons employed by him excepting persons whose income did not exceed the sum for the time being fixed as the limit for total exemption. The object of his Amendment was to call attention to the desirability of extending income-tax downwards. He would like to express his gratification at having heard a Cabinet Minister giving his opinion in favour of graduated income-tax. It was his idea that every man should pay some tax, if he had an income of any sort, towards the expenses of the State. The second point which he wished to press upon the right hon. Gentleman's attention was that the clause as it stood would enable a great many people who had other property and ought to pay income-tax to evade taxation. He could see no possible objection to his Amendment, and if it were accepted the Government would have the advantage of additional information as to the wages of the more highly paid members of the working classes.

Amendment proposed—

> "In page 9, line 15, to leave out from the word 'sum,' to the end of sub-section, and insert the words, "of one hundred pounds.'"—(*Mr. Harold Cox.*)

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.) said he quite understood the hon. Member's view with regard to the larger question. He was not quite sure, however, that he understood the second point. The hon. Member would observe, if he looked at the second paragraph of the section that—

> "This provision applies to all person employed by an employer, except persons who are not employed in any other employment and whose remuneration in the employment, for the year does not exceed the sum for the time being fixed as the limit for total exemption from income-tax."

MR. HAROLD COX said that, without asking the Chancellor of the Exchequer to alter the incidence of taxation, his Amendment was merely to enable him to get additional information with regard to the wages of the better paid working classes.

MR. ASQUITH failed to see why the hon. Member fixed the sum at £100.

MR. HAROLD COX said he did so merely to be on the safe side.

MR. ASQUITH promised to consider the matter.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause 20 agreed to.

Clause 21 :—

*MR. CHIOZZA MONEY (Paddington, N.) moved an Amendment, the effect of which was to require a declaration of aggregate income from all sources from every person on whom notice was served. He said that the Amendment dealt only with the machinery of the income-tax, but was of the greatest possible importance in connection with any just arrangment of taxation. As the clause stood it was necessary for any trader or any person making any profits, gains, or income in respect of which he was chargeable under Schedule D or Schedule E in the Income Tax Act, 1853, to make a return in the form required by the notice whether he was or was not chargeable with duty. That covered very many cases. In addition the State obtained personal declarations of yearly income-tax from a considerable number of income-tax payers desiring to claim abatement. He supposed the number of declarations might in this way amount to 700,000. As he had already pointed out in a former debate, this number represented a considerable proportion of the income-tax payers. He would also draw attention to the fact that, under the provisions of the present Finance Bill, there was a system of differentiation introduced which was only brought into operation in respect of all such persons as cared to make a declaration that their total income did not exceed £2,000 a year. If they showed Somerset House that their income was under that sum, then they would have the benefit of the lower rate of 9d. instead of 1s. in the £. That would have the effect of raising the number of ratepayers making individual declaration from 700,000 to perhaps 900,000. As a result nine out of every eleven income-tax payers or thereabouts would in future be compelled to declare their entire incomes. The effect of his Amendment was to claim an individual declaration from every taxpayer, and he failed to see what could possibly be said against such a plan. On the other hand, however, there was a great deal to be said for it. It was high time we informed ourselves more closely as to the distribution of the wealth of the country from a social point of view and from the point of view of the statesman who desired to acquaint himself with the social meaning and effect of our manifold activities. Such information was well worth having for its own sake. Whenever they attempted to arrive at a just system of taxation they were repeatedly baulked because they could not estimate the distribution of income with absolute accuracy. Whenever an appeal was made for a graduated income-tax they were told that their estimates were illusory, and that there was not sufficient foundation for the statement that the rich were very rich and the poor were very poor. It was high time that they began to address themselves to obtaining more accurate information as to this really very important matter. There was also the injustice of the thing. They went to employers and compelled them to return what, in the great majority of cases, was the aggregate incomes of their employees, whilst at the same time they did not require the employers themselves to return their incomes. Under the new provisions of the Bill, which made a searching investigation even into workmen's incomes, undoubtedly an even greater sense of injustice would be caused than at present existed. He did not blame the Chancellor of the Exchequer for using greater care, on the other hand he gave him his support, but he thought it was time that they made the methods of income-tax calculation more stringent for the rich as well as for the poor. When they had done that they would no longer have to adopt the rough-and-ready methods which necessarily governed our system. At present the Chancellor of the Exchequer could only come to the House and remind the Committee that every 1d. of the income-tax yielded roughly about £2,000,000. That was not enough. They wanted to know the operation of that penny in regard to all taxpayers. He would be most happy to accept any Amendment the Chancellor of the Exchequer might think necessary in connection with the wording of the clause; but, so far as the principle of it was concerned, he urged it upon his attention, and trusted that in the interests of a just and scientific system of taxation he would see his way to accept it.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 9, line 24, to leave out Subsection (1), and insert: (1) Every person upon whom notice is served in manner prescribed by Section 48 of the Income-tax Act, 1842 (which section relates to the delivery of notices by assessors), requiring him to make a return of his income chargeable to duty under any and every schedule of the income-tax, shall make a return in the form required by the notice, which shall show the amount of his aggregate income from all sources, whether he is or is not chargeable with duty, and upon what part or parts of such aggregate income, if any, income-tax has already been paid under the income-tax Acts by deduction at the source, and in default shall be liable to a penalty under Section 55 of the Income-tax Act, 1842. Provided that a penalty inflicted in the case of a person proceeded against for not complying with this provision, who proves that he was not chargeable to income-tax, shall not exceed £5 for any one offence."—(*Mr. Chiozza Money.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said he understood that his hon. friend desired, instead of the present system of returns of income when abatements were demanded, that every individual should be required to return the whole of his aggregate income. He thought his Motion was a little premature. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer had this year seen his way to propose something in the nature of a graduated income-tax or a super-tax, then the proposal of the hon. Member would have been necessary, because it would then clearly be essential that every taxpayer should return the whole of his income; but until they had the opportunity of considering the question of a super-tax he did not see that any advantage would be gained by the proposal. It would lead to a good deal of irritation and would be of no administrative advantage to the Department, who, under the Bill as it stood, would obtain all the returns they required for the purpose of assessing and imposing the income-tax. There was no necessity for the proposal either on pecuniary or administrative grounds, and he was afraid the Government could not accept it. His hon. friend had based his proposal chiefly on the ground that it would give interesting and useful statistics to future Chancellors of the Exchequer and to students of finance like himself. He agreed that it would do so, and he agreed also that they were at present groping in the dark in regard to many of these matters. They had not the statistics and the information with regard to the fortunes of taxpayers, which were no doubt very useful, but he did not think they would derive sufficient benefit to warrant their imposing the proposed additional burden on the taxpayers. The Bill was intended in some cases to simplify the returns and to obtain more adequate returns, but his hon. friend had not been able to show there would be any pecuniary or administrative benefit for his proposal, and he was afraid they must oppose it and ask him to postpone it until some more opportune season of dealing with the question.

MR. S. T. EVANS (Glamorganshire, Mid.) said he was sorry on various grounds to hear the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. He did not follow that it was at all necessary to show that there would be any advantage to the Exchequer from having returns made, but as a matter of fact, there would be considerable benefit, because not only was it clear that it was morally right to compel everybody to make returns when they already compelled nine out of ten, but, if they did so, they would be able to put their hands on a great deal of income which escaped taxation at the present time. The Income-Tax Committee reported that, in their opinion, personal declaration of total net income should be compulsory, and that it would be of great value, not merely for statistical purposes, but also in preventing evasion and avoidance of full assessment—

> "Compulsory personal declaration from each individual of his total net income in respect of which taxation is payable is expedient, and will do much to prevent avoidance of payment of income-tax."

He knew the words "in respect of which taxation is payable" limited the matter to some extent, but he was on the point whether any profit would result to the State from calling from the returns, and he thought it was perfectly clear, if they did make it compulsory upon everybody to make the returns, they would be able to seize a great deal of assessable income which now escaped altogether. The right hon. Gentleman had said the returns would cause a great deal of irritation; but why, when they were already irritating 700,000 taxpayers, should they decline to irritate the 200,000 taxpayers at the top of the list? It might be some irritation to tradespeople to have to make returns of their incomes, but the people whose incomes were not returned at all were those who had their own accountants and to whom it would be no trouble whatever. He absolutely failed to understand why they should not compel those people to make returns when they were already irritating 700,000 taxpayers. There was no doubt that the motive which actuated the 700,000 taxpayers to make the returns was that of securing abatements, but the object of the Exchequer was to ascertain the proper amount of income-tax that people ought to pay, and, if that could be done by the application of the screw in the one case, surely there was no reason why the screw should not be applied in the other. He submitted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer might even now adopt the recommendations of the Committee so far as they went and accept the proposal of his hon.

friend, which went further than the Committee, in order to put himself on sound ground. If the Chancellor next year was going to apply his energies—as no doubt he would—in further improving the law in regard to the income-tax, he ought to seize the opportunity now, and next year he would not be groping about in the dark. If these compulsory returns were made, he would know what amount of money was available, and probably he would find that the amount was so large that he would be prepared to adopt the recommendations of the Committee with regard to a super-tax. This was an essential part of the perfecting of the machinery of the income-tax laws. The Chancellor had gone a long way in that direction, but he was a little diffident when he drew the line at this point, and he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would even now adopt the proposal of his hon. friend.

*MR. ASQUITH said he could assure the hon. and learned Gentleman and his hon. friend who had proposed the Amendment that he did not at all accept or assent to many of the arguments which came from them with regard to its being inquisitorial and offensive to require compulsory returns of this kind. It was very possible they might come to it before they were very much older. He would be glad, however, if on the present occasion his hon. friend did not press his Amendment. It was not quite correct to say that it carried out the recommendations of the Income-tax Committee. The hon. Member for Paddington knew that.

*MR. CHIOZZA-MONEY: I did not say so.

MR. ASQUITH said it went a great deal further. The real utility of it would be that it was a necessary preliminary to a graduation of the income-tax in the upper scale—that was to say, to the imposition of a super-tax. He was sure that it was with that object that his hon. friend proposed the Amendment as part of the general scheme which he had seriously adumbrated in regard to future requirements. It was a coherent part of that scheme, but, as he explained in introducing his Budget, without any prejudice whatever to future action as to the super-tax, he did not find himself in a position to give any definite decision as to the graduation of the income-tax. Therefore as he thought the steps they were taking at present by the earlier clauses would bring in a great deal of income which otherwise would not have been brought in, he hoped his hon. friends would be content with raising the question. He assured them that he would give most careful attention to this subject next year.

*MR. EVERETT (Suffolk, Woodbridge) wished to support the Amendment. Many hon. Members felt that the Budget did not give sufficient relief to the poor, and unduly favoured the rich. By accepting the Amendment the Chancellor would get information from the rich which might prove a very valuable asset to the Treasury in future years in dealing with them. When such a large number of people were being required to make returns of their full incomes there seemed very little reason for refraining from asking the same from the very few at the top. At least it would not hurt those individuals. Most of them were probably in the habit for their own gratification of jotting down once a year the figures as to their income and perhaps capital too. Knowledge as to the incomes of all would be very valuable knowledge for the Treasury to possess. This Budget continued to take hard cash from the pockets of the poor. He hoped his right hon. friend would not flinch at asking for returns of the amounts of their incomes from the rich.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.) inquired whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer could give them any estimate of the amount of additional revenue which he expected to derive under this clause.

MR. ASQUITH replied that he was afraid it was impossible, because these were people many of whom *ex hypothesi* had not made a return before. He hoped it would be large but he could not say the amount.

Amendment negatived.

Question proposed, "That Clause 21 stand part of the Bill."

SIR F. BANBURY (City of London) explained that having been engaged in the Scottish Grand Committee, he had been unable to be present in the House, and found his Amendments had been passed over. [Cries of "Order."] He knew he was out of order, but this was a very serious matter for Members of both sides of the House, and therefore he called the attention of the House to it.

MR. ASQUITH said he was very sorry, but it was not his fault.

Clause 21 agreed to.

Clause 22 :—

Amendment proposed—

"In page 10, line 15, to leave out the words, 'by surveyors.'"—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

Amendment agreed to.

MR. ASQUITH said he proposed to move now an Amendment which would give satisfaction to his hon. friend the Member for Sutherland, as it carried out the intention of an Amendment which the hon. Member had on the Paper to the effect that this clause should not be retrospective. He himself thought it was desirable that they should not go back on the past, and he proposed to add at the end of the clause the words which appeared on the Paper in his name. This was a considerable concession, but on the whole he thought it desirable to make it.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 10, line 25, at the end, to add the words '(3) Nothing in this section shall affect proceedings for the recovery of fines or penalties incurred before the commencement of this Act, or extend the time during which any assessment may be made or amended, or a charge may be made on any person in respect of income-tax charged under any Act passed before the commencement of this Act.'"—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*MR. MORTON (Sutherland) thanked the right hon. Gentleman for the concession. No doubt the words of the right hon. Gentleman were better than his own Amendment. He hoped the proposal would carry out the wishes of those who were interested in the matter in the City, and at whose request he had brought the matter before the House.

Question put, and agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 23 :—

MR. COURTHOPE (Sussex, Rye) moved the omission of Subsection 1 which repealed Section 133 of the Income-tax Act of 1842 and Section 6 of the Revenue Act, 1865, which provide for the reduction of assessments or the repayment of duty in certain cases where the profits of the year of assessment fall short of the sum on which the assessment has been made. He complained that while the clause contained provisions with respect to computing profits upon an average of three years, the right hon. Gentleman was abolishing the provisions under which a man who made a bad year could get allowance for it in regard to income-tax. He wished to put this case to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. If the present Government remained in power for three years and then went out of office, how would the right hon. Gentleman like it if the authorities of the day said to him : "For three years you have been receiving an income of £5,000 a year in your official capacity ; now you are out of office and have nothing, that does not matter—you must still pay an income-tax on your average income of the last three years?" Would the right hon. Gentleman like that?

MR. ASQUITH : Suppose I made a little more?

MR. COURTHOPE said that would go into the average of the three years following and increase the right hon. Gentleman's average. He wished to deal with the case of the man who made an assessible income for three years and then made no more. He asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer to put himself in his position and realise what his feelings might be. Surely the man had a right to re-open the question. He thought it would be as well to get rid of the subsection and leave the law as it now stood. No doubt the Chancellor of the Exchequer would say that under the present system a man might re-open the figures in regard to a bad year, yet he got the benefit of a good year. Still the Exchequer got the benefit of that in the working out of the average, and between the income-tax payer and the revenue authorities there was no injustice whatever in the present system. Although in individual cases one man might gain and another lose a little, on the whole the system worked well, and he did not think the right hon. Gentleman could bring forward any argument in favour ot the repeal of these sections. He begged to move.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 10, line 26, to leave out Subsection (1)."—(*Mr. Courthope.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said the Committee must remember that the system of averages, which was not in question now, was introduced for the benefit of a certain number of persons who paid income-tax under Schedule D, and did not apply to other individuals. That concession, as he took it, was granted to traders because they could not tell exactly year by year what their income would be, and it was intended to work in such a way that at the end of a man's business career, so to speak, he would have paid exactly what he would have paid had he been able to ascertain his exact income year by year. So that it was really as broad as it was long. It was now the system, and what they required was justice for the State. At the present time the income-tax payer took the average of the three years previous to that on which he was assessed and paid on that. But if in the course of the current year, the one on which he was assessed, he had made a less profit than upon the previous year, he was entitled to re-open his assessment and to substitute the profit of the current year for that of the first year of the average and pay on the average of the three years, including the bad current year. The result was that there was a reduction in the average, and to that extent he paid less income-tax. It was a difficult matter to explain, and if permitted he would illustrate it by a concrete case. Let the Committee assume the case of a trader who, in the three years upon which the average had been taken, had made £20,000 in the first year, £10,000 in the second, and £30,000 in the third. £60,000 in the three years giving an average of £20,000 a year, on which he was assessed for the year of assessment. But if in that year he only made a profit of £10,000, he was allowed to re-open his assessment and substitute for the £20,000 in the first year the £10,000 of the current year, which reduced the total figures for the three years to £50,000, or an average of £16,600 a year. He would pay on the £16,600 and thus derive a material benefit. The individual in that case not only got the benefit of paying on the lower year of profit on the average, but that bad year came in four times, whereas the £30,000 year only came in twice instead of three times. He contended that in justice to the State each year's profit should come in for three years, so that a man should pay on his actual profits for the three years, because the Committee must remember that the Crown had now power to re-open the assessment and take a year of a greater profit in order to obtain a larger tax. He therefore did not think the hon. Gentleman was quite right in assuming that the State had the same benefit as the individual. The Act was not only unjust as between the State and the individual, but it was also unfair as between individual and individual, because the amount of relief obtained depended almost entirely on the difference of the profits in what was called the current year and the profits of the first year of the averages, and exclusively upon the profits of the current year falling below the profits of the first year, which were to be taken out. He would illustrate that by taking the case of three firms, each of whom made for three years £10,000 a year. The first firm made £15,000 the first year, £5,000 the second, and £10,000 the third. In the current year the profits of that firm fell to £5,000. They appealed to the assessor and took their first year as £5,000, instead of £15,000, and reduced their average from £10,000 to £6,660, thus obtaining relief of income-tax on £3,330. The second firm made in the first year £5,000, in the second £15,000, and in the third £10,000. They also made a profit of only £5,000 in the current year, and inasmuch as that profit did not fall below the profit of the first year, they got no benefit. The third firm made £6,000 in the first year, £12,000 in the second, and £12,000 in the third. In the current year they made a profit of £5,000, which they substituted for the £6,000 in the first year, but the total amount for the three years was £29,000, or an average of £9,666, and therefore they received relief only in respect of £333. He hoped he had made it clear. If they took three firms in the same period of four years making identically the same profits, and if they took advantage of the protection which the Act of Parliament afforded, one firm got a reduction of the income-tax on £333, and the other got a reduction on £3,333. It appeared to him that there was something radically wrong in the section, and that if they were to do justice it was time that they made some alteration in it. He had endeavoured to show that as between the Crown and particular individuals it was unfair to the Crown. As between the individuals themselves it was grossly unequal and unfair, and the deductions that might be obtained under Section 133 were purely a matter of luck. It might be that a very small reduction of profit might lead to a large deduction under the section. In regard to cases of hardship, he had endeavoured to point out that they had already been dealt with, and, from what he knew, he could safely say that the Board of Inland Revenue who had to deal with this matter and the Inland Revenue Commissioners were never severe in hard cases. Their inclination was always to treat such cases with the greatest consideration. They had the power to do so under this section, and if that section were swept away the power would still continue with them. He hoped, therefore, that this recommendation of Lord Ritchie and his Committee would be acceptable to the House of Commons.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he had followed the argument of the right hon. Gentleman, who, he agreed, had proved that which he had set out to prove, namely, that Section 133, which it was proposed to repeal, worked unfairly to the State in certain cases, and unfairly as between individual firms if they compared their cases one with another. So far he was wholly with the right hon. Gentleman. But there was a case which the Postmaster-General had not touched, and one in which it seemed to him that hardship would arise. They were simply abolishing Section 133 without taking any other steps. The Chancellor of the Exchequer left the average system where it was, and therefore he was not concerned to argue the question. The Chancellor of the Exchequer desired to have his revenue as steady as possible, and there was some advantage from the Treasury point of view in the system of averages. But that must be governed by the consideration which the Postmaster-General had put forth, that their object was to take in the long run from the individual what he ought to pay, neither less nor more, and the Treasury objection to the present system was that it took from the individual, in a great number of cases, in the long run, less than he ought to pay, because a good year did not come into the average as often as it ought, whereas a bad year was sure to remain in the average the full length of time. Let them take the case of a business just starting, and which had not a three-years average; as he understood the Postmaster-General, that individual or business would pay on whatever it made; it would not pay more, but it certainly would not pay on less than it had made. In the case of a company or business being wound up, and where the profits had been decreasing for the last few years of the company's life, or the trader's life, he or they would be paying more than they ought to pay unless the Chancellor of the Exchequer could do something to meet the case. He confessed that he did not think it was covered; he thought it was a case of hardship with which the Chancellor of the Exchequer might be ready to deal, and he would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he was prepared to consider it on Report.

*Sir **CHARLES DILKE** (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said the particular point which the ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer had just mentioned was dealt with by Paragraph 109 of the Departmental Committee's Report, which came between the two paragraphs contained in this clause. In that paragraph it stated—as the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster-General had said just now, and with a similar vagueness if he would forgive him for saying so—that the provisions of Section 134 of the Act of 1842, which gave a discretion to the Commissioners, and of Section 23 of the Customs and Inland Revenue Act of 1890, would be a sufficient protection against hardship to any individual. That was very vague. It appeared to rest entirely with the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, and that did not appear to be a very satisfactory way to meet the matter. He thought they ought to have some sort of reply from the right hon. Gentleman. One question which he wished to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer was what he expected to gain in the way of money by giving up this Section 133, so far as it still remained. The sum lost to revenue by the remaining fragment of the section had been increasing enormously in the last few years. In the interesting Memorandum of the Solicitor to the Inland Revenue, which would be found in the appendix to the Report of the Departmental Committee in 1905, and published last year, it was shown that the amount which would be gained had increased from £152,000 in 1901–2, to £363,000 in 1903–4. That was a very large amount of money, and it was increasing very rapidly, and he would like to know how much the Chancellor of the Exchequer was going to gain; and with regard to the discretion left to the Commissioners under Section 134 of the Act of 1842, and Section 23 of the Act of 1890, affecting actual loss, and also declining business, he wanted to know how far that discretion was exercised and on what lines.

Sir **F. BANBURY**, in regard to the question of averages, said the real reason why there was a very strong feeling among traders in this matter was that they were not allowed, if they were making a less sum than in the previous year, to deduct the difference, with the result that they paid a larger sum in a bad year. Under the system of averages matters really righted themselves, and the trader had to pay eventually, unless he had a decaying business. He was not dealing with a decaying business or one that was going to be wound up, however; and in the case of a genuine business, which was subject to the fluctuations of trade, he thought those who knew anything about trade would acknowledge that those fluctuations were very much greater than many persons thought. A firm, though prosperous, often made very much less in one year than in another; and the result was that in the event of a bad year the firm in question would have to pay out of their pockets a very much larger sum in that year when they could least afford it. He did not believe there would be any great gain to the Exchequer by the substitution of this system. His point had not been met by the Postmaster-General. The right hon. Gentleman had argued that it was hard upon the Treasury that they could not raise the amount of the profit in any given year if the amount increased the average. Although the argument he used was very clear, it was directed against the system of averages, under which very extraordinary results must occur. It was said that one trader would be benefited more than another, but the question was should a trader be deprived of this advantage in a bad year when it was most inconvenient that he should be obliged to pay on profits which he had not earned? He hoped the Government would be prepared to abandon this clause. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer desired to do a popular thing without hurting himself or the Treasury in any appreciable manner, he would accept this Amendment.

Mr. **ASQUITH** said the attack which had been made was really one upon the average system. As Chancellor of the Exchequer he believed that he would gain by the abolition of the system. One point against its abolition was that undoubtedly it tended to equalise the estimates made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Otherwise he might find in a year of bad trade the amount going down by leaps and bounds, whilst in a year of good trade it might go up in the same way, and that state of things was very undesirable from a revenue point of view. Under the circumstances he thought it was better to retain the system as a safeguard against fluctuation. If they accepted that view, surely the good year and the bad year ought to be dealt with on the same footing. The trader who had a bad year could take advantage of it later, whereas the revenue authorities could not take advantage of a good year. It was a case of "heads I win, tails you lose." As had pointed been out by the Postmaster-General, this clause was one of the recommendations of the Ritchie Committee, and he had simply adopted it. The ground upon which the Ritchie Committee made the recommendation was that what was sauce for the goose was sauce for the gander. In the case which the hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London had suggested the loss would be taken into account in dealing with the three years average. He had been told that the Inland Revenue always allowed this loss to be subtracted from the plus quantities for the purpose of working out the average. That was the practice which was carried on. When that difficulty was got out of the way surely the proposal of the Ritchie Committee was a perfectly fair one. One case which had been mentioned by the right hon. Member for East Worcestershire he thought deserved consideration—he alluded to the case of businesses which were steadily on the down grade. Undoubtedly that was a case of hardship, and some provision ought to be made for it. He would undertake between then and the Report stage to see if he could introduce some words which by extending the powers given to the Inland Revenue might deal with that case. As for the system being a gain to the Exchequer he did not think it would be so small as had been made out by the hon. Baronet opposite, nor did he think they would realise such a large sum as had been mentioned by another hon. Member. He thought, however, that it would be something substantial, and with the qualification he proposed to make he did not think it would involve any hardship.

SIR F. BANBURY thanked the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the way the had met them and the explanation he had given about the actual loss through bad trade being allowed.

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS (Sheffield, Ecclesall) also thanked the right hon. Gentleman for the statement he had made. The hon. Baronet had correctly stated the reasons why they desired to repeal this clause. Recently traders had been availing themselves of their right of appeal, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer had discovered that he had had large repayments to make. That, however, was no reason why the Chancellor of the Exchequer should receive money on profits which had not been earned, which was precisely what happened in the case of dwindling businesses. If the right hon. Gentleman brought forward an Amendment in that direction it would go a great way towards satisfying their requirements. Just by way of illustration he would assume a case in which the assessment for 1903, 1904, and 1905, was £13,000, £4,000, and £7,000. That gave an average of £8,000. But supposing that in 1906 the profits had dwindled to £1,000, his claim would be as follows: The first year would be cut off, and the assessment would be charged on the average of £4,000, £7,000, and £1,000. He would, therefore, have to pay on £4,000, although he had only made £1,000.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: On the other hand he paid on £8,000 when he was making £13,000.

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS said the right hon. Gentleman was assuming that his profits were continuous. He himself was assuming that the profits were going down. Therefore, the Chancellor of the Exchequer under the present system was receiving tax revenue from that man on money which had not been earned.

When the taxpayer had paid the money he could not possibly get it back. There was certainly a case for consideration. The pledge given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer would go a long way to meet what he and his friends desired, though personally he would have preferred that the right hon. Gentleman had accepted the Amendment.

*Mr. MORTON said he was aware that there was very great complication in connection with the system of averaging incomes for the purposes of the income-tax. There was a feeling among traders that the new system would be harder on them than the old. He was glad the Chancellor of the Exchequer had promised further to consider the matter and bring up a proposal on the Report stage. If the right hon. Gentleman in reconsidering the matter could see his way to drop Subsection (1) altogether, it would be much better all round. So far as he had been able to calculate he did not think that in the long run the revenue would lose much by the omission of the subsection.

Mr. FELL (Great Yarmouth) said the Chancellor of the Exchequer had stated in answer to a Question that the losses which the revenue sustained in the last three years by repayments had been £300,000, £400,000, and £500,000. The sum last mentioned was for the year 1906. The right hon. Gentleman further stated that it was a growing amount, partly owing to its being more generally known to secretaries and others that repayments could be got, and partly owing to a considerable decrease in certain departments of industry after a very active time.

Mr. COURTHOPE thanked the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the important promise he had given, and asked leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Sir F. BANBURY moved an Amendment to provide that if a person chargeable with income-tax proved "within twelve months" of the end of the year that his profits or gains fell short of the amount computed in accordance with the Income Tax Acts, he should be entitled to repayment of the amount overpaid. He said the object of the Amendment was to allow a trader reasonable time to ascertain whether or not he had made a profit. It often happened that a trader did not really know "at the end of the year" whether he had made a profit or a loss, and it might be three or four months after the "year of assessment" before he really did know. He begged to move.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 10, line 36, to leave out the word 'at,' and insert the words 'within twelve months of.'"—(*Sir F. Banbury.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'at' stand part of the clause."

Mr. ASQUITH thought the adoption of the Amendment would be a hardship on the taxpayer. The words in the section at present were "at the end of the year." Those words had been construed by the Courts, and he would tell the Committee the construction which had been put upon them. "Dowell's Income Tax Laws" contained the following note:—

"The words 'at the end of the year' do not mean at any time after the end of the year, or, on the other hand, a certain period which the Court is to determine, within which every case must be brought. The section must receive a reasonable interpretation with regard to the exigencies of business. The words mean the shortest time in which it could be done, if every exertion is made that ought to be made. It depends on the particular circumstances in every case."

Therefore, a trader at present was given a reasonable time. The Amendment would introduce a less effective provision than existed at present.

Sir F. BANBURY asked leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause 23 agreed to.

Clause 24 agreed to.

Clause 25:—

Mr. AUSTIN TAYLOR (Liverpool, East Toxteth) moved to insert words at the end of the clause to provide that the words "actual cost" should include, in the case of second-hand machinery or plant, the cost to a purchaser. He thought the words of the sub-section were a little ambiguous; at any rate certain members of the trading community, particularly the shipping community, had had a little uneasiness about the meaning. If the words of the Amendment "to the person by whom the concern is carried on," were not inserted, it might be held that the purchaser of a second-hand boat or steamer, or second-hand machinery of any kind, was debarred from claiming deductions in respect of wear and tear and depreciation, because these deductions were allowed to a previous owner. He was sure that was not the intention of the subsection. He begged to move.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 11, line 29, after the word 'deductions,' to insert the words 'to the person by whom the concern is carried on.'"—(*Mr. Austin Taylor.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. ASQUITH said he doubted whether the Amendment was necessary. There was no intention to charge a second or third buyer the original prime cost. The cost was the cost to the owner, and not the cost to the person from whom he bought. If the acceptance of the Amendment would allay apprehension in the trading community he had no objection to put it in.

Question put, and agreed to.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 11, line 30, after the word 'cost' to insert the words 'to that person.'"—(*Mr. Austin Taylor.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and agreed to.

MR. AUSTIN TAYLOR said that as a final Amendment he would move "to add after the word 'plant,' the words, 'included in that capital cost any expenditure on machinery or plant by way of renewal, improvement, or reinstatement.'" He knew from actual experience that the Income-Tax Commissioners would allow any reasonable addition for renewal, improvement, or reinstatement upon an old vessel or upon any other old machinery or plant. He spoke of what he was familiar with, and certainly in regard to steamers and ships large improvements and reinstatements were admitted as reasonable additions to capital cost. There was a question whether the capital cost might not include reinstatements and improvements, and it was only with the object of making the subsection quite clear that he begged to move.

Amendment proposed:—

"In page 11, line 30, after the word 'plant,' to insert the wo ds 'included in that capital cost any expenditure in machinery or plant by way of renewal, improvement, or reinstatement.'"—(*Mr. Austin Taylor.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 26 agreed to.

Clause 27:—

SIR F. BANBURY moved to leave out the words "during the current financial year." The object of his Amendment was to ensure that the sum of £29,500,000, instead of £28,000,000, should be directed to the reduction of the National Debt As the clause stood the addition of £1,500,000 to the Sinking Fund would only last for this year, and he desired to make it permanent. The finances of the country being in the state they were, he believed they ought to make a great effort to reduce the Debt and to increase the Sinking Fund. They did not know what would happen next year or the year after, and there was always the temptation to any Chancellor of the Exchequer to leave the Sinking Fund in order to supply to some Party or section something on which they had set their hearts. He felt certain that it was in the true interests of the country that his Amendment should be accepted, though he knew perfectly well it would not be.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 12, line 18, to leave out the words 'during the current financial year."—(*Sir F. Banbury.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

MR. ASQUITH said he and the hon. Baronet thoroughly discussed the question when he raised it on a former occasion. He saw no reason to change the opinion he then expressed. Although he agreed it was eminently desirable that this extra sum of £1,500,000 should this year be applied to the reduction of the National Debt, he thought it was also desirable that the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the House of Commons should have their hands free to deal with the matter as circumstances required in the future.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that much criticism had been levelled against his Party, and there was no subject on which hon. Gentlemen opposite had spoken more strongly than on the necessity for an increased provision for the reduction of the National Debt. The Chancellor of the Exchequer himself on many occasions had declared in very forcible language that it was the first duty of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to take steps to restore the credit of the country and to make provision for paying off the heavy Debt which had been incurred. What had the right hon. Gentleman done, following upon those brave words? He proposed, as a temporary measure, to devote £500,000 to paying off Debt last year, and again as a temporary meaure to devote £1,500,000 this year. All his brave words and all the flood of talk poured forth by the present majority when they were in opposition had resolved itself into £2,000,000 additional Debt being paid off in two years. The Chancellor of the Exchequer might retort that he was doing something more, because it had already been urged that the Government were ceasing to borrow for naval and military works, and that in that way they were fulfilling their pledges, although they were not making any substantial and permanent increase to the permanent Debt charge. Those Naval and Military Works Loans, however, were in any case coming to an end. As regarded the Naval Works Loans the late Government publicly announced in the House that they did not intend to introduce any new works into those loans, and in particular they stated that they would provide for the Rosyth Harbour and Docks Works out of Votes. Those loans were coming to an end, and it was possible to bring them to an end because of the work done under them. They were never intended to be a permanent part of our financial system. He was not going into the question as to whether the Government of which he was a member used those powers of borrowing too largely or not. It was arguable, and they had often argued it. In any case they recognised that the necessity which had forced them to have recourse to them had been met by the proposals Parliament had sanctioned, and the loans were therefore coming to an end. It was only in regard to naval and military works that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was making any alteration in the matter. He was already proposing to raise £6,000,000 by annuities of exactly the same kind and in the same way for telegraph purposes. He did not think therefore the Chancellor of the Exchequer could claim with any show of reason or fairness that that was what he and his friends had in their minds when they denounced them for making insufficient provision for the National Debt. He did not think he could claim that what he had done fulfilled the expectations which his and their utterances gave, and he was not surprised that his hon. friend desired to make the charge permanent in order that there should be a nearer approximation between the present charges and the old promises of right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite.

Amendment negatived.

*MR. HAROLD COX (Preston) said he had put down an Amendment to delete Clause 27, and he would state his reasons, although he should not press his Amendment. He had a subsequent new clause down for the reduction of the sugar duty from 1st October next. That would cost exactly £1,500,000, the increased sum the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to devote to the reduction of the National Debt, and he thought it was his duty to help the right hon. Gentleman out of the difficulty in which his new clause would involve him. He agreed as to the importance of Debt reduction. They were all in favour of it, but after all, they should not lose their heads over it. The Debt reduction must bear some relation to the amount of the Debt and to the national income and the burden of taxation. If hon. Members disputed those propositions, on what principle did they fix the amount of Debt reduction? Why should they fix the additional sum at £1,500,000 rather than £15,000,000, £50,000,000 or even £100,000,000? There must be some reason in the amount of Debt reduction, and the question was what was a reasonable amount? Last year, no less than £10,177,000 was applied to reduction of Debt. That was the largest sum ever applied in one year to the reduction of debt. This year we were applying £13,500,000 without the extra £1,500,000 involved in the clause. In previous years when we were doing well, we paid off £6,000,000 or £7,000,000 a year, so that this year we were paying off double what we paid a few years ago, without this extra £1,500,000. In order to see whether that was enough let them compare the present figure with the figure on which Sir Stafford Northcote fixed the Sinking Fund. The Sinking Fund then was barely ½ per cent. of the total amount of the Debt, and at that time there was no sugar tax, and the income-tax stood at 2d. in the £. In the golden era of prosperity before the war the Sinking Fund was 1·3 per cent. of the Debt, and at that time there was no sugar duty, the tea duty was only 4d., and the income-tax was 8d. In the present year the reductions we should make, without the extra £1,500,000, would be at the rate of 1·7 of our total indebtedness. Therefore, not only was the actual reduction the largest on record, but the rate per cent. was much higher than it had ever been before. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had therefore done extremely well in regard to the reduction of debt. The only other argument for increasing the Sinking Fund was the low price of Consols. That was undoubtedly a strong argument, but he asked hon. Gentlemen not to exaggerate the importance of the opportunity and not to lose their heads over it. What did the low price of Consols mean? It meant that they were a 3 per cent. investment, and what he asked was, whether they were entitled to take the money of the poorest people in the country in order to invest it at 3 per cent. for the benefit of posterity. He contended that if they imposed a tax like the sugar tax to raise this money it was not justifiable finance. Let them pay off debt rapidly, but let them not do it at an abnormal rate at the expense of the food of the children of the poor. He put this suggestion before the Chancellor of the Exchequer to show him where he could get the money to halve the sugar tax. If, however, his right hon. friend did not accept the suggestion he should not press it to a division.

MR. ASQUITH said this question deat with an essential part of the Budget, and therefore he could not accept the Amendment.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN asked how much new Debt was going to be created during the year by the issue of Irish land stock, local loans stock, and for military and naval works, together with the new liability to be created by the guaranteed loan for the Transvaal. The country were asked to add a new liability to those which it had at present, and to guarantee an amount of £5,000,000 to the Transvaal. They knew what the old liability was, but when they had added that £5,000,000 and others he would like to know what would be the net reduction of the liabilities of the State during the financial year.

MR. ASQUITH said that the right hon. Gentleman linked together things that were entirely distinct. It had never been the practice to include in the National Debt any sums for which this country was not primarily liable, such as Irish land and local loans stock. For these the British Government had only a secondary liability, incurred in the case of default, and no default was likely. With regard to the primary obligations of this country, he must refer the right hon. Gentleman to his Budget speech. It was impossible at this period of the year to estimate what amount of Irish land and local loans stock would have to be issued before the end of the financial year.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London) said he quite agreed that they must draw a distinction between the National Debt properly so called, and the secondary national obligations, but surely everyone would agree with his right hon. friend the late Chancellor of the Exchequer that if they were to discuss the national liability, they ought to deal not only with those liabilities for which they were responsible primarily, but with those for which they were liable in the second case. If they were only to discuss the National Debt proper, they had only to deal with the burdens which they threw upon the market which had a national obligation behind them. This was a very serious question in the present state of the money market. In dealing with the question however, they must, have some regard to the amounts generally coming upon the tax-payer and which *pro tanto* were like the National Debt and for which the nation was responsible. They might come upon the tax-payer, and they could not ignore any responsibilities which had been or were going to be in the near future undertaken by the Government. This was not the proper occasion to debate the question, and he was not quite sure that he was in order in discussing it, but it was a subject which should be present in their minds in dealing with this matter, and he had no doubt there would be in the near future some opportunity of reviewing the new obligations which the Government were going to undertake.

MR. ASQUITH pointed out that such a discussion was not relevant to the Question before the House, as this clause dealt only with the National Debt. The total sum available for the reduction of debt this year would not be less than £15,383,000. Deducting the new loans for telephones, telegraphs, and other purposes, the estimated sum payable in the current year for the extinction of liability would be £13,400,000—a larger sum than had ever before been set aside for the purpose.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said the right hon. Gentleman in the figures he had quoted dealt with the gross liabilities of the State, and the other matters to which he referred were clearly part of the gross liabilities of the State, although he quite agreed that as part of the National Debt and *qua* National Debt they need not refer to them. That brought him to his second observation, the avowed intention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to increase the credit of the country, but they might be decreasing the Debt of the country in regard to Government Stocks, while they were increasing it in regard to other stocks on the market. Therefore, unless they knew the total they might not be able to tell whether they had increased the credit of the country or not.

Clause 28 agreed to.

*MR. HAROLD COX moved the following new clause—

"As from the first day of October, 1907, the duties imposed by Section 2 of The Finance Act, 1901, and by the First Schedule to that Act, shall each be reduced by one-half."

He said the effect of the clause would be to halve the sugar duty from 1st October, and would cost this year £1,500,000. In his recent speech he had suggested that this money should be provided out of the addition which the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to the Sinking Fund. He did not however press that suggestion because he felt fully assured that they would have enough money to meet the loss. The surplus would probably be far more than sufficient to meet that sum. This proposal therefore was in no way a wrecking one, and in no way destroyed the Budget, because there was money enough to meet the demand. What were the various excuses which were put forward for the continuance of this tax? The first excuse was that we had not yet paid off the war debt. What did that mean? The war debt, according to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was calculated at present at £130,000,000, and the war taxation still remaining was £20,000,000 sterling. It was absurd to suppose that that rate was to be maintained until the whole of the war debt had been paid off. The interest on this war debt of £130,000,000 at 2¾ per cent. was about £3,500,000 a year. If they added a sinking fund of the same amount they would still get only £7,000,000 a year. Half the present war taxes would suffice to pay off the whole of our war debt in eleven or twelve years. He would like to ask who were the men who now suggested that they should keep on the sugar tax to pay off war debt. They were the very men who voted against this tax when it was wanted for the daily expenditure of an actual war. He would not mention their names; they sat on the Treasury Bench. Surely, if it was unjustifiable to put on this tax when money was wanted for a war every day it was still more unjustifiable to keep it on now. He dismissed that excuse therefore as not being substantiated, and he came to the next one — that halving the duty would not benefit the consumer. The excuse was that if you they halved a halfpenny the benefit to the consumer would be of very little use to him. He could, however, assure the Chancellor of the Exchequer that there were many parts of the country where the farthing was still very much used. There were, moreover, a large number of poor people who buy two pounds of sugar at least at a time, and he knew of village shops where an order for six pounds of sugar a week was a constant one from numerous poor customers. Moreover, the very poor who bought single pounds, if they did not gain in the reduction of the price would gain in quality. If a farthing were taken off the duty the effect would be to postpone the action of the retailer in raising the price one halfpenny or hasten the period when he had to lower it. The sugar trade was worked in much the same way as that of bread. The price of bread was not generally altered by less than a halfpenny at a time, but directly the price of flour was lowered it hastened the fall in the price of bread. The reduction of a farthing would mean the saving of 1½d. a week to the labourer who bought six pounds of sugar, and in large and poor families even more was consumed. The third excuse was that the money was wanted for old-age pensions. In this regard the two speeches of the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not tally. In his Budget speech the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "I must not permanently impair my sources of revenue in view of the future."

That seemed to imply that the right hon. Gentleman desired to keep the sugar tax for old-age pensions. On another occasion he gave another interpretation of his words, but it was certain that in the minds of a great many people that was the purpose for which this tax was required. He had not the slightest desire to conceal the fact that he personally was opposed to any system for providing pensions at the expense of the tax-payer. He regarded it as a subsidy in aid of wages, and therefore injurious to the interests of the wage-earners of the community. But assuming they wanted old-age pensions and a subsidy to provide them he still held that the Government was not justified in using the sugar duty for that purpose. Many Members might have promised old-age pensions but the Government did not. They wisely abstained from committing themselves. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said—

> "I never gave, nor, so far as I know, did any of my colleagues on this Bench give, any pledge at the general election on the subject of what is called old-age pensions."

But the Government did allow the whole Liberal Party to commit itself to the abolition of the sugar tax. They voted against this tax in the previous Parliament, and their Party was justified in believing that this was one of the first taxes they would abolish. Were they to repudiate that emphatic pledge in order to take up a scheme which before the elections never took concrete shape? If that was to be so, what was the good of any pledges? The difference was fundamental. One thing was definitely and distinctly promised and the other vaguely foreshadowed. They must first carry out the definite and distinct pledge before they took up the vague scheme. If not, what was the value of any pledge? If hon. Members might so lightly repudiate what they so earnestly promised, what became of the doctrine that this House represented the will of the people? From the point of view of political fidelity alone they were bound to make old-age pensions contingent on the abolition of the sugar tax. But that was not the only consideration. The sugar tax was the most vicious of all our taxes. In the first place, it was a tax on the food of the people, and, secondly, it was a tax on the raw material of many British industries.

It was also the most useful substitute for alcohol, as temperance Members would discover if they went to India, where everybody was a teetotaller and everybody was a large consumer of sugar. Few realised how many were the industries that depended on sugar as raw material. There was a further objection to this tax, and that was the complication that it involved. This was the consideration which made Mr. Cobden, Mr. Gladstone and Sir Robert Peel anxious to purge the tariff so as to get rid of the multiplicity of taxes which then existed. If hon. Members would refer to the Customs report they would find that all kinds of different articles, from blacking to crystallized ginger, were affected by this tax. He remembered when this tax was first imposed he had in another capacity to consult with different people as to its effect on different trades, and he found in some cases owing to its complications that for weeks and months trades were brought to a standstill because traders did not know what proportion of sugar the articles they sold contained. The tax contained all the disadvantages that a tax could contain, not the least of which was an element of protection. It was impossible to avoid either injustice to some manufacturers or special favour—protection—to others. Either was as bad as the other. Yet this was the tax they were asked to maintain in order to give old-age pensions on what was called free trade lines. A section of the Liberal Party was alarmed lest tariff reformers should outbid them by offering the bribe of old-age pensions in return for tariff reform. He would prefer the Liberal Party not to take part in the dishonest game of bribing the electors with the tax-payers' money. But if they did want to play the game they should at least play it intelligently. The main argument of the Liberal Party against protection had always been that they would not tax the food of the people or the raw materials of our industries. But the sugar duty did both. How would they persuade the electors that the sugar tax was supreme virtue and the corn tax intolerable vice? The argument was too subtle. The average man could not see why it was wrong to give a favour to a particular producer at the cost of all the consumers; he could not see that if it was done for one producer it ought to be done for all; and if it was done for all the final result would be that they would be exactly in the same position as before, except that an army of officials would have to be kept to collect the money. They would also have taught the people to trust to what they could squeeze out of Parliament rather than to their own exertions. Even hon. Gentlemen opposite, who were fairly intelligent in most ways, could not understand this important distinction between protective and non-protective taxes, or at least said they did not. Perhaps it would be more polite to say that they had not given sufficient attention to the subject. He was quite sure that the hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London, if he were to devote to the study of this subject the same amount of ingenuity that he now devoted to other purposes, would very speedily master it; and, in his dreams, he sometimes saw the hon. Baronet, in a regenerate state, patiently coaching the President of the Board of Trade in the elements of political economy. He had said that the subject was difficult. It was difficult to prove to the mass of the electors the rather subtle point involved in the distinction between protective and non-protective taxes. That being so, it seemed to him of the utmost importance, if they wished to preserve free trade, that they should also preserve those clear and distinct arguments that the mass of the people could understand. The people knew what was meant by a tax on food and raw material. Let them preserve those arguments if they wished to preserve free trade, and it was because he wished to preserve free trade that he appealed to the Committee to support the clause.

New clause—

"As from the first day of October, 1907, the duties imposed by Section 2 of the Finance Act, 1901, and by the first Schedule to that Act, shall each be reduced one-half."—(*Mr. Harold Cox.*)

Brought up, and read a first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the clause be read a second time."

MR. ASQUITH said that when he had looked at the Notice Paper and saw the various Amendments put down, he had expected that the hon. and learned Member for the Walton Division of Liverpool, whom he saw in his place, would have had the courage to move on behalf of the Party opposite the clause which had stood on the Paper in his name for he did not know how many days. But the hon. and learned Member, who was not generally afflicted with such shrinking modesty, preferred on the present occasion to retire into obscurity in order to leave to his hon. friend on that side the duty of proposing a clause couched in a very much milder form. They would hear, of course, as the debate developed, what were the views of right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite. The sugar tax had been referred to by his hon. friend as a war tax. He thought it was not so introduced; it was introduced by Sir M. Hicks Beach in 1901, not as a war tax, but as part of a general scheme for broadening the basis of taxation. Were the Party opposite now prepared to vote for its repeal? Perhaps they would hear in the course of the debate whether they were or not—whether they were going to send the sugar tax to join the coal tax and the corn tax, in which case the whole of this great experiment of broadening the basis of taxation would have disappeared into the limbo of obscurity. It might be said that this was an Amendment only to reduce, not to repeal. What of that? They knew perfectly well the grounds on which reduction of the sugar duty had been and probably would again be advocated by some of the right hon. Gentlemen who sat opposite. If they were going to reduce the sugar duty, how were they going to make good the gap but by imposing other duties, again broadening the basis, and roping in a few more of the necessaries of life—meat, corn, butter, and the rest of it? He was sure his hon. friend the Member for Preston did not share those views; and they would await with curiosity the explanations of his supporters on the other side. His hon. friend had said something about pledges. As far as he was concerned, or so far as the Government were concerned, their hands were as completely untied by pledges in regard to the sugar tax as they were in regard to old-age pensions. He would recall to the Committee the circumstances of the last general election. The Government were put in office before the election took place, and he, being Chancellor of the Exchequer, had very naturally to speak perhaps more than many of his colleagues on what the financial policy of the new Government was. What was the attitude he took up throughout the election? He would read a quotation from the first speech he made, he believed it was to his constituents—

> "I tell you perfectly frankly that it is absolutely impossible to hope for any remission of taxation until you have reduced the level of expenditure at present prevailing in this country, and until you have made, as it is my intention and hope that I shall make, a better and more adequate provision for the redemption of the National Debt."

That was the pledge he had given to his constituents; and he challenged any one in any quarter of the House to find in any speech of his, or, he believed, of any of his colleagues, made at the general election, a promise to deal either with this or any other duty in the way of remission. He never gave any such promise, and never would, and certainly as far as he was concerned they were perfectly free from any pledge. It was said that a number of his hon. friends made pledges in favour of repealing the sugar tax. He dared say they did. He did not suppose there was a man on that side who did not agree with him that the sugar duty was an oppressive and vexatious duty. He assented to almost all the arguments that had been used by his hon. friend. It was a tax on food, and not only on food, but upon one of the first necessaries of life; it was a tax on raw material from which some, not of our most important, but very important industries suffered. He must say he was a little surprised when his hon. friend, of all people in the House, —an able exponent of the most unadulterated and sublimated form of the doctrine of free trade—said that it was not easy to distinguish, so as to convince the electorate of this country, between a tax on sugar which was not protective and a tax on corn which was. He would undertake to say that his hon. friend had performed that task with the greatest possible success from a hundred platforms and was prepared to do it again. He himself had certainly done it—at least he thought he had—not once, but a score of times; and to his mind there was the broadest and strongest distinction in the world, even as among taxes on food, between those which were protective and those which were not. If that were the time and the place he could elaborate that argument with many illustrations; but that was not the time and the place, and he did not want to enter upon what was merely a parenthetical difference of opinion. He entirely agreed with the main current of his hon. friend's argument, that the sugar tax was a bad tax, a tax which ought to be got rid of, and got rid of at the earliest possible moment. He had said so before, he said so now, and he should say so again, and he hoped some day the time would come when he would do more than satisfy the hon. Gentleman in that direction. But what was the clause which his hon. friend proposed? He agreed with what he was proposing, but now that they had gone through the whole of the Budget, now that the Committee had agreed, clause by clause, to every one of the financial conditions of the year—all of which hung together as interdependent parts of a collective whole—now that they had made very considerable reductions for this year in the income-tax, now that they had devoted an additional sum of no less than £1,500,000 for the reduction of the National Debt, now that they had disposed of the whole current revenue of the year, his hon. friend came forward and asked them to incur an additional expenditure of £1,500,000, and proprosed no provision of any sort for making good the gap. Where was the difference to come from? It would have to be made good, for there would be an actual deficit on the year if they assented to the proposal. They had appropriated the revenue of the year with the general consent of the Committee. When considering general policy he had pointed out that he should much prefer to deal with the sugar tax as a whole than to tinker with it. It was perfectly true, as his hon. friend had said, that sooner or later, and in one way or other, small reductions in duty of this kind, which had no apparent appreciable effect on the price, did get down to the consumer. Yet this process was very slow in its operation, the reduction was very apt to be intercepted and deflected in its course, and the ultimate benefit to the consumer was only reaped after a considerable period of time. He remembered using that as an argument in the Budget speech for not dealing with the sugar duty except as a whole. He agreed that a very small reduction of the sugar duty would benefit some of the powerful interests which had been raising considerable agitation. The agitation had proceeded rather more from that source, he thought, than from the actual consumers, because it would cheapen the raw material used by those who happened to be producers of what did not fall within the category of necessaries, but what he would call the simpler luxuries of life, which people could do without, or for which they could find substitutes—things for which the raising of the price would be very apt to curtail the demand. The producers of mineral waters, confectionery, and other things of that kind, would benefit substantially even by a very small reduction in this duty, because it affected their raw material. With regard to the consumer, he did not believe the comparatively minute reduction his hon. friend proposed would, during the current financial year, have any really appreciable effect. His hon. friend had quoted a passage from a speech of his which he said gave rise to the inference—he could not think why—that he looked upon the sugar duty as part of the permanent fiscal machinery of the country. He had said that of the income-tax, but had never said that he looked on the sugar duty in that way. On the contrary, he had made use of expressions which showed that he regarded it rather in the light of a necessary but at the same timea transient evil, one which he could not at the moment do without, because it brought him in £6,000,000 of revenue, but one which he would be only too glad to get rid of when he saw his way to make good the gap. The financial situation of the present year was such that he could not do it, and no financier in his position could. He defied anybody, with the resources, actual and prospective, at his disposal for making the Budget of this year, to have produced a scheme by which the sugar tax could have been effectually dealt with. On the other hand, he had, as he hoped, by putting the income-tax upon a broader and more just basis, and by largely adding to our expenditure on the reduction of debt, paved the way—and he had never represented this Budget to be more than a pioneer Budget—in the years which followed, both for reductions in indirect taxation and for the develpment of a policy of fruitful social reform. They could not do everything at once, and he could only repeat that if this clause were added to the Bill and this reduction, or any other substantial reduction, were incorporated it would dislocate the whole Budget and undermine its very foundation without conferring any appreciable benefit upon the great mass of the consumers. He must therefore adhere to the Bill as it stood. But he did so with the full conviction that the tax was vicious in principle, that it was burdensome in its incidence, unequal in its operation as between different classes and interests, and as such that it ought not to form a permanent part of the fiscal machinery of the country, but as soon as the general financial situation allowed of it, ought to to be reduced, and if possible altogether abolished.

*MR. F. E. SMITH (Liverpool, Walton) said he had listened to the right hon. Gentleman's speech with astonishment, for he had intimated that there were confronting him fatal financial difficulties having regard to the stage the Bill had reached. He could readily believe that. The right hon. Gentleman had said that no responsible financier confronted with the problem which was before him would contemplate the reduction suggested by the Amendment. He would like, however, to call the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the fact that their difficulties were by no means novel; whatever difficulties confronted the Chancellor of the Exchequer to-day, so far as either the abolition or substantial reduction of the sugar duty was concerned, equally confronted his predecessor during the last four years. Indeed, he might say that the difficulties in the way of making a change of the kind now proposed were even greater then than they were at the present time. He was asked at the general election, as he believed many hon. Members were asked, whether he was prepared to vote for the abolition of the sugar duty. He was new to the House of Commons and not familiar with the modern criteria for ascertaining the will of the people, which was to be so decisive in these days. He was simple enough to think that it was the proper thing to give an honest answer to the question, and by doing so he placed himself under disadvantages which his opponent did not experience. Having given the best consideration he could to the question he decided that it was not right, and one was not entitled to make electioneering capital by giving explicit assurances, binding upon men of honour, that one would vote for the abolition of the tax. He placed himself in communication with the body who invited him to make a pledge upon the point and he discovered that his answer given in the face of a large working-class constituency was that, although he thought it was desirable that the tax should be reduced if the general financial conditions of the country justified such reduction, he was not so satisfied that they did justify it. That was the answer he gave. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had told them that if the Amendment of the hon. Member for Preston were carried it would dislocate the whole Budget. He would remind the right hon. Gentleman that although he had told them with so great satisfaction that his hands were perfectly clean and that he had given no pledge upon the matter at the time of the general election but had rather indicated that the country could not expect any reduction in the sugar tax, yet the right hon. Gentleman himself voted in that House on the same stage of the Finance Bill, in 1905, for this very reduction on the sugar tax. Therefore, how futile it was to say that he had never given any pledge on the subject at the general election when he had encouraged his ignorant followers who were making these pledges to recommend themselves to their constituencies by assurances he knew to be false. What were the arguments used by hon. Members opposite on the occasion of the Finance Bill of 1905, and which had been used repeatedly in the course of similar discussions? He did not profess to make himself responsible for the calculations, but they had never been contradicted. Hon. Members on the Front Bench opposite, including the Prime Minister, had voted for the abolition of this duty and they had told the House that if the incidence of the sugar duty were reduced a peasant who earned 18s. a week paid, in reference to the sugar duty alone, and reducing the payment to terms of income-tax, 2·63d. in the £. A working man with an income of 30s. a week paid 2·166d. and a man with £1,500 a year would pay ·2d. The man with £3,500 a year would pay ·157d. and with £20,000 a year ·0328. He had not checked these figures for himself, but they were put before the House in each successive year, and were received with acclamation by hon. Members opposite, and were largely instrumental in eliciting from them the pledges they had made. The House had heard a great deal about pledges given by irresponsible Members of the Government, but he would like to read the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade in 1904, who said—

> "Were it not for coming into conflict with the Chair it would be perfectly possible to suggest alternative proposals of taxation even if they were only licence duties. But it was not for the Opposition to suggest alternatives. As it was once said by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, it was not for the physician to prescribe until he had been called in, and the Opposition were not bound to disclose their remedies until they were in a position to diagnose the complaint. But each tax had to be considered on its own merits. The only way in which Governments could be found to face the alternatives of reducing expenditure was by the House of Commons declaring that an undue burden was being placed upon the people, and demanding that the expenditure should be cut down. All the House of Commons could do was to say, 'We will not impose additional burdens upon the people, the necessities of the Empire do not justify them; therefore you must find some other remedy by getting the heads of spending departments to cut down their estimates.'"

The author of these arguments had absented himself with no small discretion from the debate to-day. It was indeed fortunate that although the Government were apparently oblivious of their former views they had on the benches opposite 150 men who could be absolutely relied upon. The pledge given by hon. Members opposite on this point was clear and explicit, for they unconditionally pledged themselves to the following question—"The tax on sugar was originally imposed as a war tax when the idea of the Brussels Convention had not been seriously considered; it has since been retained to meet the general expenditure of the country. Are you prepared to vote for the abolition of the duty, and so afford some relief to the public and to the sugar-using industry?" There was no possible misunderstanding about that pledge. There was nothing to indicate three or four years delay and there was nothing to indicate that the claims of social reform might postpone remission. The question was: "Are you prepared to vote for the abolition of the duty?" In these days of shifting political ideals, and of wide spread opportunism it was refreshing to reflect that they had in the House that day 150 plain, honest men whose word was their bond; men who met the vigilant solicitations of the Patronage Secretary and his subordinates with the simple but sufficient answer: "We have promised, and men of honour keep their promises." Relying upon the pledges they had given he looked forward to the enjoyment of meeting these Ironsides in the lobby, and he contemplated with the greatest possible indifference the consequences which the carrying of the Amendment would have either upon the Government or the Finance Bill.

*MR. COWAN (Surrey, Guildford) said that as one of the noble army of pledge-givers he intended to support the Amendment of his hon. friend the Member for Preston. He opposed the sugar duty because it was a war tax, a food tax, and a tax upon industry. He was one of those who had given a pledge to his constituents in the terms which had been read by the hon. and learned Member for Liverpool. He gave that pledge believing that he was acting in the spirit of that intention of the present Government. On this point he had apparently misunderstood the views of his leaders, but there were 150 other hon. Members who had done the same thing. On every Liberal platform one of the chief complaints against the late Government was that after blundering into an unnecessary and costly war, when hostilities ceased they still retained the war taxes, including the sugar duty. They stated that on every platform, and they understood, and they gave the country to understand, that the Government intended speedily to repeal all the war taxation put on by the late Government. As free traders they all declared for a free breakfast table. How could they have a free breakfast table if they retained the sugar tax? He and his friends objected to the tax because sugar was the raw material of many trades. There had been thousands of workmen thrown out of employment on account of the imposition of the tax. Harrowing pictures had been drawn of the destitution which the wives and families of these men had suffered on account of the retention of the tax. It had destroyed the margin of profit out of which the wage fund came. Promises might be very inconvenient when those who made them were called upon to keep them. He supposed they were chiefly inconvenient because they had an awkward habit of coming home to roost. What did the country expect the Government to do when in power? They were expected to effect economies in the great spending departments, and to broaden the basis of taxation. They were to broaden the basis of taxation by making land pay its proper share of the burdens of the State. But the Government also led their supporters and the country generally to believe that they were going to get rid of all the special war taxation. They made the first step last year with the abolition of the export duty on coal, the only successful fiscal experiment made by the late Government. He wished it had been retained. If it had been retained and the income-tax changes deferred, the people might have been relieved of half of the burden of the sugar tax. He ventured to say that the reduction of the duty by one half would have had an early effect on the price of sugar. He did not think the sugar tax could justifiably be retained to pay for old-age pensions. While he was strongly convinced that old-age pensions should be provided by the State, he held that they should come from the general revenue; no special tax should be earmarked for the purpose. The fund from which the pensions were to be paid should not be contributed to in a disproportionate degree by the poorer classes. No class should contribute to it in any special form. He understood that hon. Members on the other side were going to vote for the abolition of a tax they themselves imposed, as they would vote for anything that would embarrass the Government. He therefore hoped his hon. friend the Member for Preston would not press his Motion provided the Chancellor of the Exchequer would give sufficient ground for the belief that next year he would reduce this tax. Members could then go back to their constituencies as men who had not disregarded their pledges. If the right hon. Gentleman was unable to give more assurance than he had given, and if his hon. friend carried his Motion to a division, he should vote for it.

MR. GWYNN (Galway) said the Party to which he belonged regarded the sugar tax simply as one imposed for the purposes of a war which was unnecessary and costly. In Ireland they detested and deplored the war on moral grounds just as much as the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for India detested it. The people of Ireland were forced to pay this tax against their will. He understood that the sugar tax at present yielded something over £6,000,000 a year. That meant that the people of Ireland were paying from year to year more than the whole of the loyalists in the Colonies contributed to the war. They talked of the loyalty of the Colonies, but if in supporting the war they had been imposing on themselves a burden like that which had been imposed on this country their loyalty might not have been quite so great. That was one reason why he and his friends would vote for the reduction of this tax. If the Motion for its complete extinction had not been withdrawn, they would have voted for it. Looking at this as a pioneer Budget, he asked which way it was heading, and he found it was preserving the taxes on tea and sugar, which pressed on the poorest classes in the community. He commended to Labour Members' attention the financial relations between England and Ireland, and said they would find that it was through the medium of such taxes as this that the great robbery was carried on year by year, and Ireland had to pay two or three millions more than she ought to pay towards the Imperial burden. The poorest men in Ireland paid as much under this sugar tax as the richest, and incidentally it pressed hard upon new Irish industries. Regarding it as flagrantly unjust, he should vote for the reduction of the tax.

*MR. SNOWDEN (Blackburn) said he would support the Amendment. He did not intend to follow the example of the hon. Member opposite by making a speech in support of the Amendment, and then asking the mover not to press it. He confessed that he did not feel altogether comfortable in being associated in this matter with hon. Members above the gangway. A few days ago the hon. Member for the Walton Division of Liverpool was good enough to express his opinion on the ideas held by Members among whom he (Mr. Snowden) sat, opinions which he described as abominable, detestable, and atrocious. He could never hope to emulate the hon. Member in the picturesque and lurid language he had used, or in his courteous attitude towards opponents, and he would therefore content himself by saying that the hon. Gentleman expressed somewhat their sentiments in regard to the opinions generally held by him and those with whom he associated. It was noteworthy that in the course of his speech he did not give one reason why the Amendment should be supported, and he ignored the fact that he himself was one of the 150 who were pledged on the subject. He thought the whole tone of the speech justified the hon. Member for Guildford in saying that the only motive the hon. Gentleman had in supporting the Amendment was to endeavour to embarrass the Government. He could only suggest that the bringing forward of such an Amendment as this was presumption on the part of hon. Members who themselves were responsible for the tax, which they would never have been called upon to repeal had it not been for the arrogant Imperialism of the last Government. He supported the Amendment as a tariff reformer, a tariff reformer who wanted a change in the fiscal system of the country, not in the direction of broadening but rather in the direction of narrowing it. He wanted a tariff reform which would not increase the burden of the poor, a tariff reform which would not make the rich richer at the expense of the poor. He wanted to see a tariff reform which would lighten what he held to be the present oppressive burden of taxation which fell upon the poorest of the population. He had two reasons why he supported that Amendment. The first was that the tax was unjustifiable, and the second that an excessive amount of taxation was paid by the working classes of the country, altogether out of proportion to that paid by the richer classes. It had been stated in the course of the debate that there ought to be some equality between the amounts raised by direct and indirect taxation. They seemed not to recognise the great difference in the capacity between those who paid indirect taxation and those on whom the direct taxes were levied. Perhaps he might be allowed to labour that point for a few minutes, but before he did so he would like to remark that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had denied that either he or any of his colleagues at the last election gave any pledge for the repeal of the sugar tax. He had in his possession a leaflet issued by the Liberal Publication Department, and very widely circulated in the constituencies represented by hon. Members opposite, and that leaflet, which he supposed was issued under the supervision and direction of the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary for Ireland, was headed "How the working man is taxed," and according to the statement made in that the working man with his family paid a tax equal to 1s. 7d. in the £, which was altogether out of proportion to the burden which fell on the richer classes. They knew there were more than two million families in the country whose total family income was less than £1 per week. What would be the amount of taxation paid by these two million families reduced to terms of income-tax? If it were 1s. 7d., taking the figures of the publication to which he had referred, upon an income of 30s. it was something like 2s. a week of income-tax paid by these two million families with an income not exceeding £1 a week. He thought nobody would seriously dispute the statement, that the well-to-do did not pay in indirect taxation on food more than the poorer part of the population. The Chancellor of the Exchequer in this Budget was relieving well to-do people with incomes of £40 a week. What did a family with an income of £40 a week pay in indirect taxation? The Chancellor of the Exchequer was reducing the taxation on £40 a week incomes to 9d. in the pound, and therefore the total amount of taxation reduced to terms of income-tax paid by families under this Bill earning £40 a week was 9¾d. in the pound, whereas under the same Bill a family of four, five or six persons with only £1 a week was paying a tax of 2s. in the pound. That, he submitted, was a sufficient justification for accepting his Amendment, and thereby doing something to lessen this oppressive and unjust burden on the poorest part of the population. Then he had another reason why he urged that it was a matter of urgent necessity. He had spoken of the incapacity of the working classes to pay, and he wanted now to show that that capacity was growing less. Their capacity to pay the sugar tax was not so great as it was at the time the tax was imposed. From 1900 to 1905, in each of those years, according to the official statistics of the Board of Trade, the wages of the working people were going down, and not only was the actual income of the working people less, but the purchasing power of their wages was less too. He had in his possession figures in regard to the cost of a number of necessaries relating to his own constituency in 1899, such as tea, lard, sugar, and one or two other articles, and he found that, comparing prices—the prices of 1899 with the prices of to-day—there had been an increase in the cost of these necessary articles of 30 per cent. The Chancellor of the Exchequer stated last week, when a Motion was made by an hon. Member in favour of reducing the £2,000 exemption limit to £1,000, that the claim of the income-tax payer was urgent, and that the present scale could not be defended. Surely he could not defend the continuance, even for another twelve months, of a tax equal to 2s. in the pound upon people with incomes so small that if every penny of it was spent to the best advantage it was quite impossible for them to provide themselves with the necessaries of life. Could he defend the continuance for one twelve months of the taxation of these people at 2s. in the pound and the taxation of people with £40 a week at 9¾d. in the pound? There had been a reduction in the tea duty, but was there a Member of that House who really believed that the advantage of that reduction on tea had gone to the benefit of the consumer? Some hon. Members thought so, it seemed, but the Chancellor of the Exchequer evidently had his doubts about the matter, because over and over again he had stated in that House that he was inclined to think that if they had not received the advantage in a reduction of the price they had got it in better quality. Might he put another question to hon. Members? Was there a Member in that House who had detected an improvement in the quality of his tea during the last six months? Let the Chancellor of the Exchequer go about the country addressing mothers' meetings and trying to convince them that they had reaped the advantage of this reduction of 1d. a pound on tea. Let them take the coal tax, that had not benefited the consumer. The result had been to increase the price of coal to the consumer. He had received a circular that morning which stated that the price of coal was 8s. per ton more than it was twelve months ago. As soon as the Chancellor of the Exchequer last year had made the announcement of his intention to abolish the coal tax, he (Mr. Snowden) met a coal dealer in the north of England in a large way of business, and he said the price of coal had already increased 2s. The abolition of the coal tax increased the foreign demand, and taking advantage of the increased foreign demand coal in this country increased in price. Therefore he submitted that, taking what had been done in tea and coal, they might justly say that so far there had been nothing done since this Government came into office to relieve by a single penny the taxation of the poorest part of the population. He had another reason why he should support this new clause of the hon. Member for Preston. The Chancellor of the Exchequer protested against the construction which had been placed on his Budget speech in regard to what he said about social reform and a "nest egg," but from a leaflet just issued by the Liberal Association for use in by-elections he read that no change was made in indirect taxation, because Mr. Asquith declined to deprive himself of sources of taxation which he intended to use for social reforms; and it was only fair that a part of the cost of old-age pensions should be raised from taxes paid for the most part by the working classes. But if old age pensions were going to be found out of taxes levied upon the working people of England, then they were going to be of no benefit. He wanted this sugar tax abolished this year, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have to look elsewhere to find the money for his old-age pensions. Something had been said by one or two speakers who preceded him about the will of the people. Could there be any doubt about what the will of the people was, or the will of the overwhelming majority of the people was on this question? Those who paid only indirect taxation were nine-tenths of the population, and naturally they would be unanimous in supporting a proposal of this sort. They were there to carry out the desires of their constituents, and they were told that there were 150 Members who were pledged to the policy of the abolition of the sugar duty. Those hon. Members had had no share in framing this Budget, and they had not been asked whether they would like the sugar tax abolished or not. This Budget did not carry out the will of the people. It was simply the will of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and no doubt having used sufficient "peaceful persuasion" during the last few days the right hon. Gentleman might succeed in imposing his autocratic will upon his followers; but his hon. friend the Member for Jarrow would be able to tell him that this Budget had more to do with the ignominious defeat of the Government candidate than anything else. His hon. friend the Member for Preston had spoken about the difficulty of getting people to understand economic questions, but here was one economic question they could understand. They could understand that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had shown his consideration for those whom in their poverty they regarded as being in affluence, and although the Government would succeed no doubt in defeating this Amendment the matter would not end there, and the will of the people in this matter would ultimately prevail.

MR. STUART WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) supported the Amendment because he believed this tax was an interference with British industry. That alone was to him a cogent reason for getting rid of it. He admitted he had not come down to the House prepared with weighty figures to show the bad effect of the tax. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had made it quite unnecessary for anyone to do anything of the kind. The right hon. Gentleman had described this as a bad tax, as a tax which ought to be got rid of at the earliest moment, and had said that he hoped to be able on some future day to get rid of it. While listening to the passionate appeal of the hon. Member for Preston he was reminded of the lady in the garden tearing a flower to pieces slowly leaf by leaf, and saying, "This year, next year, some time, never." If this tax was to go on, in time they were going to get these old-age pensions which the right hon. Gentleman had so rashly promised. For his own part he was impressed neither by the fastidiousness of the hon. Member for Blackburn nor by any consideration whether it was possible by carrying this Amendment either to provide old-age pensions or otherwise to reconsider the Budget. The fact was that the right hon. Gentleman on the main merits of the case had to allow judgment to go by default. He could only coerce the great bulk of his followers. He said, "By carrying this Amendment you will embarrass the Government in a way in which no other Motion will." They (the Opposition) had nothing to do with that consideration. They would follow the shining example of the right hon. Gentleman when in Opposition. To his mind this was a tax upon food and ought to be removed; it was a tax on industry. It did not allow a free field to British working men in the only market which they possessed. It was a tax which was more worthy to be got rid of than the tax upon tea or the tax upon coal, which the right hon. Gentleman, some of them thought, got rid of with unnecessary levity.

*MR. S. T. EVANS said he had waited more or less patiently to hear what the Front Opposition Bench had to say on this matter, and at last he had heard it. He had, however, referred to the Division List of 1901 to see how the right hon. Gentleman voted on the subject when the tax was first imposed. On that occasion a Motion was made by his hon. friend the Member for Northampton that the sugar duty should be treated as a yearly tax, so that each year they could deal with it directly instead of by way of Amendment or new clause. The right hon. Gentleman who had just spoken against the duty as a tax upon the food of the people, and upon industry, helped to defeat the Motion of his hon. friend. They heard a good deal about pledges, but he would ask what about settled convictions, and what about the convictions of the right hon. Gentleman in 1901? The truth was that this present fight was an unreal one. The hon. Member for Blackburn was as usual ungrateful for the gifts offered by the Government. He (Mr. Evans) did not not say that this Government was the best possible Government. He thought it might be better, but whenever gifts did come from them he should accept them and not look upon the donors as Greeks. The hon. Member said the abolition of the coal tax did not benefit the working class, but who was it who agitated for the repeal of that tax if not the working classes in South Wales and elsewhere? Let the hon. Member go down to South Wales and tell the miners and working people there that what they asked for did not benefit them. The hon. Member also said that the reduction of a penny per pound off the tea duty did not benefit the people, but how, if that was so, did he think that the removal of a duty of a fourth of a penny off sugar for six months only would benefit them? What was the meaning of this union of some of the Labour Members with the Tories above the gangway? The motive was, not to take anything off the sugar duty, but a desire to defeat the Government. He would ask hon. Members opposite whether they were prepared to vote for a small portion of the duty being taken off, a portion which only equalled a farthing in the pound, for only six months, for the purpose of turning out the Liberal Government who had promised to give the hon. Members measures which they all desired. Supposing the Government were defeated and the Party opposite came into power, did the Labour Members really expect that they would take off the sugar tax? If this Government were turned out this tax would not be abolished, for Sir Michael Hicks Beach who imposed it distinctly said it was not a war tax, but a tax which ought to take its place and be continued as part of the general system of taxation of the country. He, himself, was quite easy in his mind, because he did not give a pledge with regard to that vote; but, at the same time, if the Government met this Amendment to-day by saying that the sugar tax ought to be a permanent tax—if they repeated the words of Sir M. Hicks Beach in imposing it—then he would vote against them. He believed with the hon. Member for Blackburn that indirect taxation was higher than it ought to be, and he would much prefer putting 2d. on the income-tax this year and abolishing the sugar tax altogether. But the Committee must look at the general fiscal basis upon which the Government were preparing to Budget not only for this year but for years to come. They had already embarked on a readjustment of the income-tax, which was as important to the working classes indirectly as the reduction of indirect taxation was directly. Though it was not his duty to salve the consciences of others he did not believe that the pledge which had been quoted was intended to mean that those who gave the pledge must vote against the sugar duty whatever the circumstances, or the time, or the result might be. This was an attempt, engineered by hon. Members above and below the gangway, merely to make difficulties among the supporters of the Government, and accordingly he would oppose it.

* MR. STANLEY WILSON (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness) said he would like to say a few words in support of the Amendment. He had invariably on every public platform advocated the reduction of this tax. Hon. Gentlemen opposite said the tax was not introduced as part of a war tax, but he thought everybody understood it was. He well remembered the Under-Secretary of the Colonies going down to the country and addressing a meeting of working men, asking them for pure patriotism to give their support to this tax because it was a temporary tax, and they could think when they put a lump of sugar in their tea they were firing a shot at Kruger. The working man was still firing that shot at Kruger, and apparently he would still go on firing it for some years to come. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had, he thought, admitted that the tax

was too high at the present time, and he had had two opportunities of removing the injustice to many of the industries of this country which it inflicted. If instead of removing the coal tax—the benefit of which had gone into the hands of the colliery proprietors and not the working men—the Chancellor of the Exchequer had removed this tax, the working classes would have benefited. He admitted that at the present moment sugar was fairly cheap, but what had they to say to the future?. The Government had announced their intention of following the fatuous policy of retiring from the Brussels Convention, which in his opinion would cause a great feeling of uncertainty, because before we joined that Convention the price of sugar was subject to the most severe fluctuations. A year hence we might find ourselves under the control of foreign sugar bounties. He could not help thinking that hon. Members on the other side must welcome this new clause, because it gave them an opportunity of carrying out the pledges they gave at the last general election. The Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Prime Minister had his sincere sympathy for the somewhat awkward position in which they were placed at the present moment. They were men of the highest political morality, and he failed to understand how they could possibly go to their supporters and ask them to break the definite solemn pledge they had given to the electors of the country. There were many hon. Members who had gained their seats by the pledges given with regard to this sugar tax. A man who broke that pledge was not worthy of a seat in that House. If hon. Members who gave this definite pledge were not going to fulfil it, the question would be asked, "When is a pledge not a pledge?" and the answer would be, "When it is given by a Liberal Member of Parliament."

MR. MASTERMAN (West Ham, N.) said it was interesting to listen to a lecture on broken election pledges. He was not one of the 150 Members who had given the pledge about which they had heard so much. He was astonished that there should have been 150 Members on any side to give such a pledge, and he must confess that he did not feel any great sorrow for them. Perhaps they would learn to throw such pledges into the fire the next time they met their constituents—which he believed was an invariable practice of every safe politician. Under existing circumstances he would be compelled to vote with his hon. friend the Member for Preston in this matter. They had heard the hon. Member for Glamorgan trying to explain how absurd pledges were under certain conditions; they had heard him attacking hon. Gentlemen opposite in quite an unjustifiable manner, not for the first time, when they happened to express an opinion which many on that side of the House shared, in favour of such a readjustment of taxation as would press less hardly upon the poorest class of the community. Regarding the Budget as a whole, he could not see how it was possible that Members who had voted for every clause of the Finance Bill could now calmly vote with the hon. Member for Preston for the repeal of the sugar tax. It was not business. But his own past was entirely clear on that matter, because from the beginning he had realised that if they were going to vote for the remission of taxation in certain directions, they would have to vote against the remission of taxation in other directions, and he thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer would at least recognise that he was consistent when he said that he had not voted for reducing the tea tax, and that he had voted against the relief given to earned incomes of under £2,000 a year. They were all glad that the right hon. Gentleman had taken more money from the rich; he wished the Chancellor had taken a considerably larger amount in death duties, but perhaps the amount of £700,000 which had been estimated would increase to £1,200,000 or £1,400,000 before the year was over. That was a sum which the Chancellor of the Exchequer could use for any purpose.

MR. ASQUITH: Not before the year is over.

MR. MASTERMAN said that at least there would be a substantial sum before the year was over, and most of them had a strong hope that the rate of mortality might continue and that there would be a very substantial increase on the estimate of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The right hon. Gentleman had got an extra sum, and honestly agreed with a large number of Members that the taxpayers who most needed relief were those with incomes between £160 and £2,000 a year, and he relieved them of a quarter of their income-tax. He knew that this class of voters in the country largely controlled newspapers, and that the class who earned incomes below £2,000 included all the journalists in this country, and the opinion had got abroad, emphasised by statements about the bitter cry of the middle classes, that these were people groaning under the income-tax, and that they ought to be relieved. He protested against that view. He held first that that class should not be relieved, and, secondly, that the relief which was to be given to them ought to go to the partial repeal of the sugar duty. If he had given a pledge it would not affect him at all; he should vote exactly in that way, and he should not make a pathetic appeal to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to get him out of a difficult position, for which, after all, the right hon. Gentleman was not responsible. It was no good their neglecting the fact that this particular duty pressed with inconsistent hardship upon two classes of the community—the very poor as he saw them in his own constituency, and those who had been thrown out of work in consequence of the ruin brought on their industry by two forces, one the Sugar Convention and the other the sugar tax. He was in rather a different position from most Members of that House, because he happened to be fighting a by-election when this question was before the country. The evidence brought before him, especially from East London, was that a number of people had been thrown out of employment owing to the losses which had fallen on some industries in which sugar was a raw material. He did not wish to indulge in pathos, but he did not think the House realised the struggle there was for existence in some of the very poorest quarters of this city—how the poor had to pile up halfpennies and pennies to provide a summer holiday for their children, and the pressure upon them was not to be compared with the pressure on men with £500 or £1,500 a year. He thought he was justified in voting that they should not give the remission of 3d. in the £ to the income-tax payers, and that the amount should go to the relief of the sugar tax, which was at present left in its full burden. He must honestly confess, however, that he could not follow the position of hon. Members who, either from fear of their constituents or from a wish to vote against any kind of taxation, had up till now accepted every kind of clause in the Budget Bill, and were now, in an entirely irresponsible manner, going to record their vote in favour of this particular Amendment.

*MR. THEODORE TAYLOR (Lancashire, Radcliffe) said he was extremely sorry that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had kept on the sugar tax in opposition to which he had spoken again and again in the country. Were it not for the fact that he knew the Chancellor's heart was with him, he would now vote against its continuance; but even though he disapproved of the tax he was going to vote for his Government. [OPPOSITION and ironical laughter.] Yes, as hon. Members opposite had done in the last Parliament, and it did not lie in their mouths to reproach hon. Members on his side for doing the same thing. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had gone as far as he could in the direction of committing himself to the abolition of the sugar tax in his next Budget. If it were merely a question of the merits of the tax he would give a hundred votes against it if he had them. It was the worst possible tax. Whatever might be said about the coal tax, as to which he considered there was some doubt, there could be no doubt whatever that this tax was a burden upon the consumer. All taxes upon articles necessarily imported from abroad were paid by the consumer in the country to which they came. Of all the really objectionable taxes imposed by a Conservative Government this was the very worst, and yet it was the one still untouched. It was not protective like the corn tax, but it was at a much more burdensome rate. The corn tax and the coal tax had been repealed, and the tea duty had been twice reduced, but the sugar tax still remained, though this was the second Budget of a free trade Government. The non-remission of the sugar tax was in painful contrast to the remission on earned incomes under £2,000 a year. This tax was one on earned incomes under £40 and £50 a year. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had said that he did not think that he could halve the tax, because sugar was not sold by farthings, but he had himself found that it was so sold. He gave the Chancellor of the Exchequer credit, however, for the desire to make only one disturbance in the trades in which sugar was used, and that the best disturbance was that of knocking the tax off altogether. This was the worst possible tax because it must necessarily fall most heavily upon the very poor in proportion to their income. Sugar was a food. He believed that there was more sugar eaten by the children of the poor than the children of the rich. Poor children ate sugar and jam where rich children ate meat. Sugar was, moreover, not only a raw material of many industries, but it was a most essential raw material of an industry that they wanted to cultivate in this country, viz., the fruit industry. They ought to do all that they could to promote the culture of fruit and the manufacture of jam and such articles. The sugar tax was the poor man's income-tax, and in his conscience he could not in any way defend it. It was only on the principle that he would trust the Chancellor of the Exchequer to carry out his promise at a suitable time—that was a time when he was able to afford it, which he hoped would be next year. Did any one doubt that if the tax had yielded £600,000 instead of £6,000,000 it would have been repealed? The real reason why the tax was retained was because it produced £6,000,000. But the bigger the tax the greater the wrong. If it was wrong to tax poor people £600,000, it was ten times as wrong to tax them £6,000,000. The extent of the evil was no excuse for the evil itself. The Chancellor of the Exchequer would, he was sure, have been the first to resent the new imposition of the tax. It came within the category of the many things that existed because they were there already. It might be urged as a reason for the continuance of the tax that sugar was cheap in spite of it, but as free traders they objected to going into the question of the price of commodities to be engineered by a Government. It was a bad reason. It was not the business of the Government to make cheap things dear. It was the business of a Liberal Government, at any rate, to make things as cheap as they could. A tax upon an article of large consumption added very considerably to the amount of capital necessary to carry on the trades concerned. This was a tax of 40 per cent. on the market value of raw sugar, and it had been as high as 50 per cent. In these days, when capital was dear because it was wanted in industry, and had been dissipated so much in South Africa, it was not a worthless argument to bring in favour of the abolition of the tax that all the industries using this commodity had had to employ extra capital to the extent of 30 or 40 per cent. without any addition to the real volume of trade. We did not want our system of taxation to cause more capital to be employed in trade without any accompanying advantage. The effect of this shortness of capital was that Consols were low in price. This surely was an argument which should appeal to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Such taxes as these actually helped to increase the nation's expenses by raising the rate of interest at which the State and municipalities could borrow. In opposing the Amendment he was voting not against the reduction of the sugar tax, but for the continuance in office of a Government from whom they had already had great reforms and from whom they were going to have great reforms in the future. If they kept the present Government in power they would have further reductions of expenditure, less indirect taxation, and he hoped more and more direct taxation. Paradoxical though it might seem, he was voting against a reduction of this tax to keep the Government in power in order that the policy of the reduction of taxation might go on, that the poor man's loaf might be kept from taxation, and that they might have temperance, educational and land reform, and all those other reforms which hon. Gentlemen opposite did not like and were doing their best to obstruct. [OPPOSITION ironical cries of "Next year."] He was voting for the continuance of a bad tax for one more year in order that they might keep in office the best Government they had ever had.

MR. SCOTT (Ashton-under-Lyne) said it was quite true that 150 hon. Members had pledged themselves to the repeal of the sugar tax, and there could not be a greater object lesson as to the policy of the present Opposition in regard to this tax than the fact that 150 such pledges had been given. Those pledges had been given because an industry had been interfered with. A tax which formerly did not exist had been placed upon a raw material used in the confectionery and allied trades. What would be the position of such organisations when they had scientific tariff reform, under which industries came to Parliament to secure subsidies and help for their industries? They would find that almost every Conservative Member of the House would be returned pledged to support and help some particular industry by taxation. Organisations of that kind, which existed for one specific object, did not add to the advantage of politics or the judgment of hon. Members. He was going to support this Amendment, because he believed that the sugar duty could be reduced by a farthing, and that consumers would instantly feel the benefit of the reduction. Speaking with full knowledge of the distribution of this article, he had no doubt that on the very day the duty was reduced by one-half the purchaser in every shop in the country would reap the benefit. When the right hon. Gentleman took a penny off tea twelve months ago, he warned him that the consumer would not get the benefit, and the consumer never had received any benefit from it. He did not think they ought, at the present time, to have entire relief from taxation in regard to sugar. He was one of those who, whilst recognising that sugar was one of the most important foods of the working classes, believed that the working classes were as largely responsible as anybody for the existence of the sugar tax. It was not advisable that the working classes should get the idea that wars could be lightly entered upon, and that when they were over they would not be expected to put their hands in their pockets to contribute towards the cost. His reason for demanding that this tax should be taken off was not because it hit the working classes, but because it was a tax upon industry. Sugar was the raw material of some of the most progressive industries in this country. Previous to the Brussels Sugar Convention there was no industry in this country that was showing greater advancement, for we were sending to foreign countries increasing quantities of goods of which sugar formed the principal raw material. Those Members of the House who had had the advantage of extensive foreign travel would have noticed in every foreign country English confections and manufactures in which sugar formed the principal part, and those engaged in that industry were now being seriously affected by this tax. The fruit growing industry had also suffered. It should not be overlooked that in the manufacture of jam sugar formed between 65 and 70 per cent. of that article. Another reason why he objected to the sugar tax was that the country did not get the full benefit of it. The tax was 4s. 2d. per cwt., but the consumer had to pay 4s. 8d. per cwt., and that showed a considerable leakage. Those who dealt largely in articles in which sugar played such a prominent part found that the whole of their business had been disorganised by this tax. Formerly he used to be able to buy tinned fruits from the other side of America, but the difficulties which were now associated with that trade were very great because they had to arrange a particular thickness for the syrup in the tins. Officials had to be appointed to superintend this business, and the trade was being so much hampered that those engaged in it would not waste their time over it, and were leaving it to other people with more patience. He would have liked to fix the date at 1st March, but he recognised that they could not alter the arrangements which had been made in connection with the Budget this year. He was anxious that the expenditure on the social reforms of the future to which they were pledged should not come out of the taxation of the food of the poor. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer would say that next year when the Government brought forward their social reform programme he was not going to rely on this tax he might be induced to alter the vote which otherwise he would give, but if the right hon. Gentleman did not give that promise, he would be true to the pledges he had given, and to his own personal conviction, and record a vote which he could defend in this House and in the country.

MR. HUNT (Shropshire, Ludlow) said an hon. Member opposite had stated that the sugar tax was one of the worst possible, but he added that he was going to vote for it. The great bulk of the Members of the Liberal Party were going to vote for it, and he congratugated them on their courage in view of the fact that sugar was a food and a necessity of the poor. It contained far more nourishment than ordinary white bread. [An HON. MEMBER: No.] That was so, and it was perfectly well known. Sugar was the raw material of many powerful industries in this country. It seemed to him very extraordinary that this extra democratic and much-belauded Government should insist on taxing sugar 30 per cent., more especially as the Chancellor of the Exchequer had stated that an import tax came straight out of the pocket of the poor. On the other hand, there were many millions worth of manufactured goods, as well as expensive food products used exclusively by the rich, allowed to come into the country without paying a halfpenny of duty. That was what hon. Gentlemen opposite called legislating for the benefit of the poor. He believed that hon. Gentlemen who specially represented labour agreed with hon. Members on the Ministerial Benches in this matter. That was a thing which had always puzzled him very much indeed, and he thought that in future it was likely to puzzle the working classes of this country. The imposition of the sugar tax could not give the working people one hour's work or a shilling in wages. That tax was part of the true Cobdenite finance. Import duties were imposed on articles largely consumed by the poor, and they produced a revenue of from twenty to thirty millions, while millions of pounds worth of the luxuries of the rich were imported without any tax at all. There were about 200 Members of the Liberal Party in the House who gave the people of the country to understand that they would vote against any tax on sugar. He remembered forty years ago he saw placards in Lancashire bearing the words "Vote for the Liberal Party and a free breakfast table." They had not got that yet, and it did not appear that they were likely to get nearer it for many years under the present system of taxation. Hon. and right hon. Gentlemen would now be able to go back to their friends, the many starving millions, during the autumn months and tell them that provisions were dearer now in spite of the promises made at the general election that they would be cheaper. They would be able to tell their constituents also that Liberal promises were like pie crust—made to be broken.

*MR. CHARLES ROBERTS (Lincoln) said he would not attempt to follow the hon. Member for the Ludlow Division.

MR. HUNT: Nobody ever can.

*MR. CHARLES ROBERTS admitted that he was utterly unable to deal with the devious ways of tariff reformers on this question. He was not one of those whose names appeared on the list of 150 Members pledged against the tax. He did not think he could have supported the Chancellor of the Exchequer if they had been asked to vote for the sugar tax as a permanent part of the finance of the country, but the right hon. Gentleman had not asked them to do so. He fully agreed with all that had been said as to the badness of the tax, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been careful to invite them to vote for it only as a temporary tax. He joined in the appeal to the Chancellor to get rid of it in a later year. There were two circumstances which reconciled him to the temporary inconvenience of the tax. In the first place the action of the Government in reference to the Sugar Convention had, to some extent, lightened the burden of the sugar-using trades. It was obvious that the sugar-using trades would find the area of supply enlarged by the action of the Government in declining to penalise bounty-fed sugar. That would tend to reduce the price of sugar. The second reason which reconciled him to the temporary continuance of the tax was that it had effects which were not at first sight seen. The Committee had been invited to consider the question of sugar from the point of view of temperance reform. The brewing industry was one of the largest users of sugar, the quantity last year amounting to 2,746,615 cwts. The only point against the abolition of the tax was the effect that under present circumstances it might have on brewing, and he would ask the Committee to follow out what would really happen if the sugar tax were abolished. They would make a present of £600,000 a year to the brewing trade. He did not grudge them the money; he did not grudge anybody the profits if they could reconcile it with their consciences to take the profits of that trade, but under the present working of the law these profits would be at once registered in an increase of licence values. They could capitalise that extra profit of £600,000 a year at ten years purchase, which was the practice of the Inland Revenue Department now. Thus the abolition of the sugar tax meant the raising of licence values in this country by £6,000,000. That meant that they restricted still further the amount of the reduction of licences, which was already partial, limited, and tentative. That was an indirect and unexpected result of the abolition of the tax. He trusted the Chancellor of the Exchequer would bear in mind that any reduction of any impost on the brewing trade was at once registered in increased licence values and *pro tanto* restricted the power of the licensing authorities to get rid of superfluous or undesirable licences. Thus at the same time that they abolished the sugar tax they must raise the licensing duties, and therefore his point was that he could reconcile himself to the temporary continuance of a bad tax on condition that when, as he hoped, in subsequent years the Chancellor of the Exchequer swept this bad tax away, he would supply its place. He believed this point was a very real one, and he commended it to the attention of the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, that the abolition of the sugar tax should be accompanied by the raising of the licence duties. He should vote only for the temporary continuance of the tax, but these were reconciling considerations in which he comforted himself under the present circumstances.

MR. RICHARDSON (Nottingham, S.) said he had noticed while sitting there that every speaker had commenced by making a confession. Therefore, to be consistent, he would state openly that in spite of the fact that he had given a promise to vote for the reduction of the sugar tax he intended that night voting for the Government. If he could have found no reasons for taking that course before coming to the House that day he would have found sufficient ground for it in the combination of the two leaders by whom this Amendment was being engineered. To follow the lead of the hon. Member for Preston in conjunction with the hon. Member for Liverpool was bound to incur disaster. The real reasons why he took that apparently paradoxical course were these. In the first place, the Amendment of the hon. Member for Preston was an unreal Amendment; there was no reality at the back of it. He could have imagined what were the reasons that would have induced the hon. Member for Liverpool moving the Amendment, but as a matter neither of principle nor of policy could he understand the course taken by the hon. Member for Preston. If it were wrong, as a political principle, to tax sugar to the extent of 4s. 2d. per cwt. surely in principle it was wrong to tax it to the extent of 2s. 1d. He was not then going to combat any of the statements made by any of the hon. Members who were going to vote in favour of the Amendment, because he was a firm believer in every one of them. He believed that the sugar tax had been and was now an iniquitous and wicked tax, not merely one that bore very heavily upon the industries connected with the sugar trade, but also struck a blow at labour, besides placing burdens grievous to be borne upon the very poor. One of the advantages that would probably be secured by this debate was that it would teach the Opposition a lesson or two in the principles of free trade. He argued this point to show that he was a firm believer in free trade. Let them take, for instance, this very article as the raw material of the confectionery trade. Previous to the imposition of the sugar tax, 100 bags of sugar roughly speaking cost £100. After the tax was placed upon the article 100 bags of sugar cost £140. The price of the manufactured article, a necessity, immediately went up about one third, from 30 to 40 per cent., and this had the effect of restricting and limiting the output. Hence the manufacturers' profits were forthwith reduced. But how did this affect labour? Employment, they must remember, always went with the turnover of goods and not the turnover of cash. 100 bags of sugar now cost £140 instead of £100, but although there was nearly half as much again cash capital required, there was only the same number of men employed in the manufacture of 100 bags. How did that affect labour? It affected it in this fashion. There were three factors in the production of this manufactured article of confectionery: the manufacturer, the capital and the labour. As soon as the manufacturer found he was paying nearly half as much again for his sugar he naturally went to his landlord to get a reduction of his rent to meet expenses. His landlord would say he had plenty of competitors and he could not reduce the rent, and his banker would not reduce the interest charged. The only other factor he could apply to for reduction of expense was labour. If the number of workmen were reduced or the hours they worked were reduced it must seriously affect wages, and in families with small and limited wages the reduction of income was a great consideration. He would vote for the remission of the tax but not at the dictation of men who openly preached in favour of food taxes. He was convinced that the sugar tax was not a permanent tax but a temporary expedient. The direct result of carrying the Amendment would be the dislocation of the Budget as a whole and probably the resignation of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It was because he believed in the new principles embodied in the Budget, and also because the Chancellor was honest and sincere in his statement, that he would not be a party to the destruction of the Budget, nor would he help to drive out of office a man who was entitled by his achievements to stand in the forefront of Chancellors. There were some who scarcely believed in the right hon. Gentleman's honesty or ability to carry out what he had promised, but he would refer them to the right hon. Gentleman's speech in introducing the Budget where he made a distinct promise in reference to old-age pensions. The right hon. Gentleman said in that speech—

> "But this I do say, and I wish to say it with all the emphasis of which I am capable, speaking for the whole of my colleagues who sit upon this Bench, that in the sphere of finance we regard this as the most serious and most urgent of all the demands for social reform, and that it is our hope—I will go further, and say it is our intention—before the close of this Parliament, yes, before the close of the next Session of this Parliament—if we are allowed to have our way—to lay firm the foundations of this reform."

He believed that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had the Government at the back of him. Prime Minister and Members were alike sincere in their promise. They had the ability to carry out that great reform. He, personally, was one of those who had perfect faith in the Government. He knew there were those who had not faith in the Government intentions, and he deeply deprecated the remarks which had been made with reference to the Labour Party on that side of the House, and their attitude towards the Government. Whatever some of the other Members of the Labour Party might think of the Ministry and of the Prime Minister, one who stood at the head of that Party—one whose absence and its cause they all deplored (he referred to the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil)—had written of the Prime Minister in the *Labour Leader* of January 4th—

> "I have a profound distrust of Party-newspaper eulogies of Ministers or 'coming men,' but in common fairness I must say 'C.B.' has earned, and fully deserves, all the praise heaped upon him. He seems to be mellowing with age and really desirous of effecting some useful social legislation. Of one thing I have convinced myself of, namely, that where the Liberal performance falls short of the promises, the blame will not rest with 'C.B.'"

With those sentiments he cordially agreed, and it was because that night they had a choice of one of two good courses, that he intended to vote for the Government. The working classes he represented and to whom he belonged placed so high a value on old-age pensions that in spite of the pledges given he was quite sure they were prepared to forego the abolition of this tax for another year in order that the worn-out veterans of the working classes might have that long-denied reform. As the son of a village worker he could tell the House that all his uncles and aunts—eight in number—all respectable working people, who lived to between the ages of sixty-five and seventy, with the exception of one, had to receive parish relief before they died. When he saw such a thing as that, did the Committee suppose he was going to sell the birthright which belonged to him for that miserable mess of potage?

Mr. HEMMERDE (Denbighshire, E.) said he was one of those whose names appeared on a list of signatories of a certain pledge. He was under the impression he never gave it, but if he did not it was not because he was not prepared to give it. But in any case he did not understand how it was argued that the men who signed that particular pledge were bound to vote against the Government on the Amendment under discussion. That pledge was given to men outside the constituencies and in general terms, and was not directed to any particular time at which they should vote for the abolition of the sugar duty. No one would have signed such a pledge if what had been suggested now as the interpretation of that pledge had been suggested then. The pledge he had given in respect to the sugar duty, if he had given a pledge at all, was understood on both sides as an expression of sympathy with those who desired the abolition of the tax. It was not a binding pledge to vote against the tax at the first available opportunity. He did not feel called upon to vote against the Government. The debate had been useful in that it had called forth a clear expression of opinion on the balance between direct and indirect taxation. In his opinion, that balance had never been kept in the past, and he could not see how it could be argued that it had. It was obvious that for years the poorer classes had been overtaxed, that the indirect taxation hit them more hardly than any other class, and the balance to which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had referred had not existed. Personally, he was in favour of the abolition of both sugar and tea duties, and he would be greatly disappointed if the Government went out of office without abolishing them. He was more than disappointed, and it was opposed to the general view among the Party, that the sugar duty was to be relied upon as the basis for old-age pensions. He did not know that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was relying on that, but if he was he should not regard it as being consistent with one pledge the right hon. Gentleman had given. The question before them was not whether the sugar duty should be repealed; they had to weigh the differences. Too little weight was given to the alternatives. Supposing the right hon. Gentleman did abolish the sugar duty, whence would he obtain the revenue now derived from this source? If the Chancellor of the Exchequer had determined to abolish the sugar tax he would have had to resort to some other source of revenue. He had given very sufficient reasons why he should not increase the licence duties. It might be obtained from an increase of the income-tax this year. He had graduated it downwards but not upwards, and in his Budget speech had expressed some doubt as to whether it could be graduated upwards in at all a satisfactory sense. He (Mr. Hemmerde) was quite prepared to wait until the right hon. Gentleman had completed his investigations on that subject before calling upon him to graduate the income-tax upwards. There was another source of revenue, namely the land. A year ago the Chancellor of the Exchequer said the question of the taxation of land values was occupying his most earnest attention, and the question was, could the right hon. Gentleman have imposed this year, to take the place of the sugar tax, a tax on land values? If that had been possible he would have voted for it at once, and a revenue from that source would have enabled them to dispense with the sugar duty. But the valuation system of this country was absolutely chaotic, and nothing had been done by the Government since it had come into power to lay a basis for land valuation. There had been a great deal too much delay in bringing in the Land Valuation Bill, but he believed that had it been brought in at the earliest possible moment it would still have been impossible to put a tax on land values which would have resulted in a revenue this year. So that resource was closed to the right hon. Gentleman. He might have increased the death duties more than he had done, and it was a matter for regret that he had not. But if the right hon. Gentleman was contemplating raising more money by means of either death duties or land monopolies, it would be undesirable to increase the death duties now if they were to come off a year or two hence. He thought these points were all relevant to the discussion to-night. The question was what they were to do with the sugar duty. He was not prepared to vote for it year after year. He regarded it as an odious tax; that the man who had only £1 a week paid a larger tax on that income than any other person in the country. Added to the fact that it was a food tax was the fact that it was also a tax on raw material, and one which lent itself to unfair argument in the mouths of the tariff reform Party. It was a bad tax, but he did not see that the right hon.

Gentleman had had a fair chance to deal with it, having regard to the fact that he had had to frame a second Budget within twelve months of coming into office in succession to the most extravagant Government of modern times. It was, therefore, unreasonable to ask him to repeal this duty at the earliest possible moment, but it was reasonable to tell him that they could not go on voting for it year after year, and that it would be a gross violation of all their pledges to base old-age pensions on a food tax of any kind. Had there been in his opinion a real opportunity of abolishing this tax altogether he would have voted for the Amendment, but as, in his opinion, there had not been any such opportunity he thought they must possess their souls in patience for a little while. It was not imposed by the Party opposite as a war tax, but for broadening the basis of taxation, and right hon. Gentlemen opposite always broadened the basis of taxation by placing it on the shoulders of the poor. He had no doubt that his having spoken for and voted in favour of the Government would be used against him in his constituency, but he gave his vote with confidence because they owed it to the electors to do everything they possibly could to establish the finances of the country on a firm basis. It was easy to say that this tax should come off first—but when the Chancellor of the Exchequer was engaged in overhauling the question of income-tax, dealing with the question of land values and land duties, and the whole question of the finance of the country, it was not the moment to take it off. And they would not be doing their duty to their constituents if at this moment they did anything to show the people of the country that their confidence in the Government was at all shaken.

MR. R. DUNCAN (Lanarkshire, Govan) thought the Amendment should have the support of the Committee for the reason that the sugar tax was admittedly a tax upon food. The question was whether a food which was so generally used was unduly taxed or not. He thought that it would be admitted by all who considered the question that it was much too highly taxed, with the result that an impossible price was put upon it. The effect of raising the price was to diminish consumption. It also stimulated certain industries which, although they flourished, did not flourish in a manner altogether healthy, because they had had an undue advantage which other industries had not. He did not regard the sugar tax as an iniquitous tax, but he certainly thought that at its present height it was exorbitant and should be reduced, and wise finance would reduce it. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had asked the proposer of the Amendment what he proposed in exchange for this tax, and that being so, it would not be out of order to say that as an alternative there could not possibly be any harm in remitting the duty entirely on sugar produced by our Colonies whilst keeping a duty upon that which came from foreign countries, thus give a little advantage to those who lived under our flag. If the Colonies were attacked by the arms of one power we should be prepared and proud to defend them, and he saw no reason for not defending them from the fiscal operations of those countries. He would support the hon. Member for Preston.

*MR. MADDISON (Burnley) said that in this debate some Members had been haunted by pledges. As far as he was himself concerned he had denounced the sugar tax before he was asked for any pledge. They believed as free traders that our system could never be in any way what they wanted while the necessaries of the people were subject either to revenue or to protective duties. But really the youngest politician in the House must be aware that any pledge which was given was bound to be subject to rational conditions. There was no man in the House who had said that he would vote for the repeal of the sugar tax in the first or the second session; he had declared against the principle of the tax, and would give effect to that declaration on the first opportunity. But he had also learned in his little way as a politician that he was more or less in the hands of a Government, and so was everybody else.

*MR. THORNE (West Ham, S): No.

MR. MADDISON: Well, everybody but anarchists. He could imagine his hon. friend even becoming that as a luxury, but the ordinary being was more or less in the hands of a Government. Those of his hon. friends opposite who were Socialists would have some kind of government. He rather thought that his hon. friend had got beyond government.

MR. THORNE: I may some day.

*MR. MADDISON: He had always thought that the path to anarchy was through Socialism. Some hon. Members appeared to treat the House as though it were a debating society. [" Hear, hear ! "] He was very glad that his hon. friend agreed with him. He submitted that in this discussion they were not debating the merits or demerits of the sugar tax so much as the Budget as a whole. At a very early stage of the Budget was the time to make a determined stand, and not upon the present occasion; and the Amendment, whether it was successful or not, would do nothing to repeal the sugar tax. Did anybody in that House really believe that, if the supporters of this Amendment were succesful—there was no danger of it—it would promote the repeal of the sugar duty? [" Yes."] He thought that hon. Members were not really serious when they said that it would. Therefore, he was going to vote, without any apologies and without any qualms of conscience, but in a businesslike way, in support of the Budget, though it was by no means perfection. There never would be a Budget that was perfection, because there would never be a Government that was perfection. But, taking the Budget as a whole, it was in his opinion distinctly a good one and was in the interests of the workpeople of the country. They had to think not merely about the sugar duty; they had to think about the reduction of the Debt, and although he knew very little about high finance, he knew sufficient of it to be aware that the reduction of the Debt was not merely valuable for capitalists, but that it ought to and must have a beneficial effect on industry and therefore upon the working classes as a whole. This Budget contained a magnificent reduction of the Debt, and in that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had shown a good deal of boldness. He wished the same courage had been put into increasing the death duties and in other directions. Involved in their vote that night was the £2,250,000 set aside in the Budget for old-age pensions; and he ventured to think that this provision was a landmark in the history of the question, because it was the first time that in any Budget provision had been made by which a nucleus of old-age pensions was formed. Therefore, the vote which they were to give that night was a substantial and not a flimsy one; it was not merely a Party vote. So far as he was concerned he would yield to none in his dislike of the sugar tax, which at once penalised the consumer and the producer, a tax which made food dearer and which increased the price of raw material. There was literally nothing to be said for it. For himself he would not place old-age pensions on food taxes. He would not help old age at the expense of the young; but although these were his strong views, he would venture to say that if they were to put it before working men and ask them whether they would have old-age pensions or the sugar tax, he was quite certain that they would choose old-age pensions and prefer to keep the sugar tax on. For his part he would refuse to base old-age pensions on any such unjust and even cruel basis as a tax on such a useful food as sugar. He had the greatest respect for his hon. friend the Member for Preston, who had always the courage of his opinions, and whose views he often shared, although he thought he often showed a strange lack of proportion. The Amendment was put forward as an alternative by one who was opposed to old-age pensions; its mover asked them in the name of the policy of anti-old-age pensions to vote for the Amendment; and his chief supporters on the other side of the House were protectionists, tariff reformers and preferentialists, or whatever they liked to call themselves; so that the Amendment rested on hostility to old-age pensions and free trade. The Budget began a big reform so far as the National Debt was concerned, and by voting for the Budget he was quite sure that they would be doing that which was in the best interests of social reform.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) thought that most hon. Members would agree that the debate had been most useful, and was one which they hoped would not be unfruitful in its results. It was a most interesting feature of the debate that, although it had lasted a considerable time, not one of the speakers from beginning to end had defended this sugar tax. He thought that marked a most important step in the controversy, and that even if there was nothing else, and there was no division, those who were in favour of the abolition of the sugar tax might well be satisfied. Whatever the result of the division might be there could be no doubt that the fate of this tax was sealed. The House was unanimously in favour of its abolition. There had not been a single word, even from the Opposition side of the House now, in favour of the tax. When on previous occasions they moved this Amendment, and when he had moved it himself, hon. Members opposite had voted them down. To-night he presumed they were prepared to vote for its abolition. He welcomed their conversion, he was glad to have their support, and he hoped for their assistance and the assistance of hon. Members on his side of the House at the proper time. There could be no hon. Member who represented an industrial constituency who was not anxious to see the repeal of this tax; that he thought went without saying. He was not included in the notable 150. He believed the pledge which those hon. Members had given was in reply to a request from a particular centre that they should state their policy in reference to this particular matter. He thought that when many of their friends became older Members of Parliament they would not be so eager to pledge themselves to an outside agency. For himself he was not ready to reply to any secretary of a particular association which had an object to promote. Hon. Members opposite had spoken about pledges, but what about their pledges in the last Parliament? What about the pledge they gave in regard to old-age pensions, which helped them to get into power? The least that was said about pledges on the other side of the House the better. Hon. Members who had given pledges must explain their own position. He had not given any pledge on this subject, but he was quite as anxious as any other hon. Member to see the abolition of the sugar tax. They had been asked to look at this question from the point of view of the Budget as a whole. Personally he shared most sincerely the expressions of regret that, although up to the present they had had two Liberal Budgets, there had not been that recognition of the pressing demands of the poorest of the people which they all desired to see. He hoped that when the opportunity presented itself the poorest of the people, who ought to be the first consideration of any Government, would be remembered in the next Budget. What they had to consider was the quickest way in which they could obtain the abolition of this tax. Could they attain this object more quickly by following the leadership of the hon. Member for Ludlow, or the hon. and learned Member for the Walton Division of Liverpool? Had they any guarantee from the Opposition that their policy in regard to this tax had been altered? Hon. Members opposite remained perfectly silent in regard to that question, almost as silent as they were about free trade in the last Parliament. If the Government were defeated upon this Amendment would they be any nearer the abolition of this tax? They had to face immediate contingencies, and the defeat of the present Government would mean that the Leader of the Opposition would be called upon to form a Government, and, judging from past experience, no doubt the right hon. Gentleman would stick to office as long as he possibly could. Consequently, they had to fall back upon the promise of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he would at the earliest possible moment do what he could in the direction of reducing this tax The speeches which had been made in this debate, and the statement made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, plainly indicated that it would be a very short time indeed before this tax was abolished.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.) was unable to congratulate Radical Members upon their courage. One hundred and fifty Members opposite gave a definite pledge to vote against the sugar tax on the first opportunity. ["No."] That evening would show how they redeemed their election pledges. When was a pledge not a pledge? When it was given by a Radical Member of Parliament to his constituents. He would remind those Members who now said they would wait until next year of the Spanish proverb, "The street of to-morrow leads to the city of nowhere." He had never before listened to a debate so hollow, the only exception being the earnest speeches of hon. Members below the gangway, and the equally earnest speeches made from the Opposition side of the House. He wished it to be brought home clearly to the people of this country that there were 150 Members of the House who had given a solemn pledge on this question which they were going to break that night.

MR. C. DUNCAN (Barrow-in-Furness) said they were going to have a very peculiar division, and the House might well be called the home of inconsistency. He had himself made a pledge, and meant to stick to it, for he believed that sincerity was a quality that would go a long way in this country. Those who were members of the Labour Party could claim that they were sincere, for, although they were going to vote against the Government, they would remain practically the only free-traders in the House. It was most inconsistent of the Government to take off some of the income-tax from people who had from £20 to £40 per week, while retaining £6,000,000 of sugar tax, which fell on the poorest classes. He disagreed with that reduction of income-tax. He had to pay income-tax, and was delighted to pay it; he did not grumble at a 1s., and would not mind paying a 2s. tax if some of the outstanding social questions could be settled. He was one of those who desired to see some betterment of the condition of the people of the country, and he was prepared to pay his share towards bringing that about. If the sugar tax were kept on it would be an empty affair to set aside £2,250,000 for old-age pensions. It could not be very encouraging to those who at the last election voted for free trade to find that a free trade Government was still keeping taxes upon the breakfast table. This was a very inconsistent attitude, and the sooner they got this tax taken off sugar the better it would be for the future prospects of the Government.

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON (Northumberland, Tyneside) said he desired to associate himself with the view taken by the hon. Member for East Denbighshire on this subject. They were all agreed that the sugar tax should be abolished, but it was impossible to try to get rid of it in the manner suggested by this Amendment. The effect of reducing the sugar duty would simply be to put further difficulties in the way of obtaining old-age pensions. It had been said by the hon. Member for Blackpool that the abolition of the coal tax had entirely failed to benefit the mass of the working classes. He and others rather regarded that tax as a restraint upon trade, and voted for its abolition in order to free trade. The benefit that had followed was enormous, and the whole of the mining population of the North who had demanded the repeal of the tax had found it had operated in the interests of trade. The Chancellor of the Exchequer did well in taking off the coal tax. The fact that the sugar tax was a tax in restraint of trade was the main point of the argument for taking off the sugar tax, and he rather suspected that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he had to go over his two Budgets again, would take off the sugar tax first, inasmuch as it was a restraint on certain manufacturing trades, while the tax on tea was not. The experiment of reducing the tax on tea having been made with the best intentions, and with the hope of benefiting the poor consumer, the position at the present juncture made it clearly impossible to take off the sugar duty without absolutely stopping the beginning made in the way of providing old-age pensions. He deprecated the remark of the hon. Member for the Kirkcaldy Burghs, that pledges were given in the heat of the moment. He hoped that no Member of the House would offer such a plea as that for not giving his vote in accordance with his pledge. He refused to give pledges to any cause he did not believe in, but he trusted that he should not be so confused in his politics as not to know whether he believed in a principle or not. He had during his life as a journalist and politician pointed out breaches of pledges by the Party opposite, but he would not taunt any man with a breach of pledge except it was one lasting the whole Parliament for which he might be elected. He had given a pledge to vote for the abolition of the sugar duty. But in giving that pledge he reserved to himself the right of deciding the time when he should give effect to it. He was not bound to redeem the pledge the first time the question of the sugar duty was raised. If the Government showed no disposition in the course of a whole Parliament to repeal the tax, then he should feel compelled to vote against them. But to vote against them that night would mean not the removal of the sugar tax, but the postponement of old-age pensions. He meant to vote in such a way as would tend to secure the repeal of the tax, but to vote for the Amendment would really be an evasion of the pledge he had given. To vote for the mere gratification of hon. Members opposite, whose sensitiveness on matters of pledges was simply notorious, was a thing which he would not attempt to do.

*MR. CHIOZZA-MONEY said he was one of those who had given a pledge in favour of the repeal of the sugar duty, and he stood there to say that he was quite prepared to give that pledge again that night and to give effect to it by his vote. He thought the members of the Party with which he was associated would have searchings of heart before they could vote for the continuance of a tax which they had denounced for a good many years. It was not merely that an enormous majority had been returned to that House in direct opposition to the taxation of food and raw materials, but the same Party had also for years advocated what had been called the "free breakfast table." Why had they been opposed to taxes on tea and sugar? It was because the taxes on these articles were poor men's taxes. They pressed conspicuously on the poorest of the poor. Indeed, if one desired to fashion an instrument of taxation which would press heavily on the poor man, he could imagine no article better for that purpose than sugar. It was unnecessary for him to denounce the sugar tax at this stage. It had been roundly denounced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself, not only while he was out of office, but in the course of the debate. He would point out that while the sugar tax had been denounced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, it had been maintained, while the income-tax, which the Chancellor did not denounce, had been reduced. That was the gravamen of the charge which he had to make. The Committee had been implored not to regard the sugar tax as an isolated thing, but to regard the Budget as a whole. It was because he regarded the Budget as a whole that he was opposed to this tax. In the Budget regard had been had to the well-to-do classes. The sugar-tax meant 16s. or 17s. a year to every family—an amount that was keenly felt by the working class in towns, and by agricultural labourers in the country. On the other hand, the differentiation of the income-tax meant to a man who had £200 a year a gain of only 10s. Even the lower middle classes would gain more by the repeal of the sugar duty than by his right hon. friend's scheme of differentiation of income-tax. The abolition of the sugar tax would mean a gain to seven-eighths of the entire population of the country, whereas the proposals in the present Budget conferred benefit on a very small number indeed. The trade agitation against the tax was reasonable; it was not a demand for a favour, but a demand for the removal of a disability that should never have been imposed on manufacturers. Capital to the amount of £40,000,000 was invested in trades for which sugar was a raw material, and 250,000 people were employed. The effect of the tax was shown by the fact that a firm who made a profit of £13,000 in 1900, in 1904–5 incurred a heavy loss, while another firm, with a capital of over £1,000,000, made a profit of £58,000 in 1900, and in 1905 only £1,000. It was an unjust tax, representing from 30 to 40 per cent. on the cost of material. Any trade which had that special disability imposed upon it would be justified in appealing to hon. Members not to continue the tax. They were told that they ought to remember the claims of social reform, and especially old-age pensions in connection with this matter. Old-age pensions were important, but he would appeal to the Committee to remember that, after all, the greater number of people born in this country never lived to be old at all. Of the 1,250,000 people born during one year in the United Kingdom not 250,000 would live to be sixty-five or seventy years of age. The reason for that would be found in returns relating to the conditions of life in the towns, and especially in the slums. It was due to under-feeding, and many other evils which he could mention. There were hundreds and thousands of people who would be injured by the imposition of taxes on food. Important as old-age pensions might be, it was still more important to remember the young, and to leave untaxed one of the chief foods of the young. The Committee had been told that the passing of the Amendment would cause the dislocation of the Budget. He ventured to point out that it would do nothing of the kind. The passing of the Amendment would involve a loss to the revenue of only £1,500,000. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had already £600,000 in hand in the first quarter of the present financial year. There was no question whatever but that the whole of this £1,500,000 would be realised in connection with the present financial year. Even a larger sum would be realised, and that meant that so far as that Amendment was concerned hon. Members need not fear that by passing it the Budget would be dislocated. Apart from that he ventured once more to appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to make a definite promise for the future. Those of them who felt bound to keep their pledges and to vote for this new clause would be the first to rejoice if the right hon. Gentleman would make them a promise to do something to reduce this tax next year. They had not had that promise, and it was simply because of the indefinite character of the language used that he had ventured to inflict these words on the Committee even at the eleventh hour.

MR. W. E. HARVEY (Derbyshire, N.E.) said he should not take up the time of the House except to make a few remarks with regard to the question that had been raised with reference to the coal tax. If anybody was entitled to speak in that House on the coal tax it was the men who represented mining divisions and the interests of mining life; and he ventured to say that there was never a greater unanimity in any one trade of this country than there was in regard to the repeal of the coal tax.

*THE CHAIRMAN: This is not a question of the coal tax, but of the reduction of the sugar tax.

AN HON. MEMBER: On a point of order; I submit that you allowed the hon. Member for Blackburn to speak about the coal tax.

*THE CHAIRMAN: It is not in order to make a speech only or principally about the coal tax. The hon. Member for Blackburn dealt with it incidentally in a general argument about the sugar tax.

MR. HARVEY said, with regard to the sugar tax, that the present Chancellor of the Exchequer did not put it on, and they on that side of the House were not responsible for the war, nor for the sugar tax, which had been imposed by the other side, and if there was one thing that pleased him in the Budget, it was that as an Englishman the Chancellor of the Exchequer recognised the duty of paying back, which some of them believed after all was a good old English custom. It was very easy to contract debts; it was very easy to put the responsibility of paying them back upon other people's shoulders; it was very easy to ask posterity to pay for what they ought to pay themselves, but he was one of those who believed that the working men were willing to pay off their debts, and when they were told that the relief that was given to taxation in another direction had done no good, and—he would not like to misrepresent the hon. Member for Blackburn—that the coal tax had done nobody any good at all——

MR. SNOWDEN: I said the repeal of the coal tax did not affect anybody in his capacity as a taxpayer.

MR. HARVEY, continuing, said there had never been a tax repealed that had benefited the miners of this county more than the repeal of the coal tax. He would go further, and say that of the 46,000 miners in his county, two-thirds of them were stopped a day and a half a week owing to the coal tax, but when it was repealed they worked full time, and their wages had been considerably increased. He wanted to say that the hon. Member for Blackburn, if he understood him aright, inferred that 8s. had been put on the price of coal. If he did say so, he (Mr. Harvey) was there to say that the average selling price of coal in the United Kingdom——

*THE CHAIRMAN again called the hon. Member to order.

MR. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield) said that at the last election he gave no pledge to his constituents as he was unopposed, but he would like to say that when he was first returned to that House, long before any fiscal proposals had been put forward by the hon. Member for West Birmingham, he gave a definite pledge that he would never at any time while a Member of that House vote for any taxes on the necessaries of life, and he had accordingly during the seven years he had been a Member on every possible occasion voted against all taxation of the necessaries of life, including sugar and tea. That night he was accordingly going to vote for the Amendment. Hon. Members on that side of the House had been excusing themselves for the course that they were going to take. So far from being one of the 150 Members, he had never joined any association of the sort in question in his life, but pledges no doubt had been given by hon. Members on that side of the House; they were given during the general election on every Liberal platform, and the cry was "No taxation on the necessaries of life." [OPPOSITION cheers.] He was very glad to hear those cheers from free-trade Members of the Opposition, because unfortunately hon. Members on the other side of the House who were going into the Lobby with him that evening, did not go on any conviction of the rights or wrongs of the case, but simply to put the Government in a difficulty. So far as certain Members sitting below the gangway were concerned, their view also appeared to be to hamper the Government of the day on every possible occasion. It had been said that in voting against the Government that evening they were playing into the hands of the right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite. But he would ask what would happen if the Government were defeated? The Prime Minister would, as Prime Ministers had done before, come down to the House and move a vote of confidence in the Government, and he would be the first to support it. If the Government did not then put a duty on sugar the Chancellor of the Exchequer could then turn his attention to other sources of revenue. For instance, to take the trade in which he himself was engaged, the coal industry, mining royalties might be taxed But having pledged himself to vote for the abolition of the sugar tax he felt bound to record his vote for the Amendment. Such a vote could have only a good effect, as when the Chancellor of the Exchequer came down to the House next year to make his statement he would know that there was on that side the strongest possible feeling that the tax must go.

SIR CHRISTOPHER FURNESS (Hartlepool) said he recognised that the House was now ready to vote, and he would not detain them long, but however large or however small the majority of the Government might be he thought the debate had been a very important one. He recognised that in the lectures they had received as to political morality it had been, however, a very hollow debate, and he would like to state his position. He would not have risen to state his views but for the fact that one of the Members of the Labour Party had challenged them to produce a single item of the Budget which had benefited a single consumer. The hon. Gentleman had said that the removal of the coal tax did not benefit the consumer or the taxpayer; but the removal of that impost had had the effect of increasing the wages of many people engaged in work in his own constituency. He thought the time had arrived when the country should consider the question of old-age pensions. He was in favour of old-age pensions and also of the removal of every unnecessary tax on articles of food and the necessities of life, and it was for that reason he intended to vote for the policy of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It had been one of the greatest pleasures of his life to create at his own works a pension fund which enabled many men to conclude their lives in contentment and in peace. While he was in favour of the abolition of the duty on sugar, and in favour of old-age pensions, they could not expect any responsible Chancellor of the Exchequer to get up in his place and promise old-age pensions at once. Such a declaration at the present juncture would reduce the national security and lower still more the price of Consols. They were told that Consols were now equal to a 3 per cent. investment, but it was more than that, and for the Chancellor of the Exchequer either to-day or later on to make a promise that he would remove the sugar tax and bring in a system of old-age pensions would affect the credit of the country. Therefore, he said the Chancellor of the Exchequer had acted wisely in continuing this tax, and whether or not his name appeared on the paper of those who had pledged themselves to vote for its abolition was not a serious matter, because he was looking at the Budget as a whole. The national finances ought to be put in proper order, and it was a serious matter to those engaged in the trade and commerce of the country that that should not be done. It would be a serious matter, however, if the Chancellor of the Exchequer were to make such a rash promise as to remove the tax, and at the same time promise old-age pensions. He therefore intended to vote with the majority that evening. Whether that majority was large or small one thing was clear, namely, that there were always those who were ready to leave the responsibility to the Government, and if they wished to arrive at a right conclusion they need only investigate the condition of the trade of the country which was caused entirely by the demoralisation which had taken place in late years. He should support the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

MR. HARWOOD (Bolton) said that all those who wanted to get rid of this tax ought to vote for the only Chancellor of the Exchequer who had promised to get rid of it. [OPPOSITION cries of "But he has not promised."] The right hon. Gentleman had gone as far as he could. It would be unparliamentary and against House of Commons etiquette for a Chancellor to make a definite promise so long before his Budget to remove any tax. They had heard a good deal about the morality of pledges. What was the meaning of a pledge? It did not mean that they were to give a vote in a particular way. The electors of this country were sensible people, and those who hated the sugar tax wanted them to take the course which was likely to get rid of it soonest. That course was to support the right hon. Gentleman.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 175; Noes, 312. (Division List No. 272.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork,N.E.)
Acland-Hood,Rt Hn.SirAlex.F.
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Ashley, W. W.
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt.Hon.Sir H
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour,RtHn.A.J.(City Lond.)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Baring,Capt.Hn.G.(Winchester
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry,N.)
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Boland, John
Bowles, G. Stewart
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Bull, Sir William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. H. M.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cavendish,Rt.Hon.Victor C.W.
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Chamberlain,RtHn.J.A.(Worc.
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Clough, William
Clynes, J. R.
Coates, E. Feetham (Lewisham)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings,Rt.Hn.J. (Birmingh'm
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig,Charles Curtis(Antrim,S.
Craik, Sir Henry
Crean, Eugene
Cullinan, J.
Curran, Peter Francis
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Du Cros, Harvey
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Duncan,Robert (Lanark,Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Faber, Capt. W. V. (Hants, W.
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fell, Arthur
Field, William
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Fletcher, J. S.
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest (Berks, East)
Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Glover, Thomas
Gordon, J.
Gretton, John
Gwynn, Stephen Lucius
Halpin, J.
Hardy,Laurence (Kent,Ashford
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazleton, Richard
Helmsley, Viscount
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Hill, Sir Clement(Shrewsbury)
Hills, J. W.
Hogan, Michael
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hudson, Walter
Hunt, Rowland
Jenkins, J.
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kenyon-Slaney,Rt.Hon.Col. W
Keswick, William

Kilbride, Denis
King,Sir Henry Seymour(Hull)
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Law, Andrew Bonar (Dulwich)
Lea, Hugh Cecil (St. Pancras,E
Lockwood,Rt.Hn. Lt.-Col.A.R.
Long,Col. Charles W.(Evesham
Long,Rt.Hn. Walter(Dublin,S)
Londsale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Lundon, W.
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeigh,Charles (Donegal,E.)
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
Magnus, Sir Philip
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks, H. H. (Kent)
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Masterman, C. F. G.
Meagher, Michael
Meysey-Thompson, E. C.
Middlemore,John Throgmorton
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Mooney, J. J.
Moore, William
Morpeth, Viscount
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Nicholson, Wm. G. (Petersfield
Nield, Herbert
Nolan, Joseph
O'Brien,Kendal (TipperaryMid
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly,James (Roscommon,N
O'Malley, William
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parker, James (Halifax)
Pease, HerbertPike(Darlington
Percy, Earl
Power, Patrick Joseph
Randles, Sir John Scurrah
Ratcliff, Major R. F.
Rawlinson,John Frederick Peel
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Richards, T.F.(Wolverhapmt'n
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, S. (Sheffield,Ecclesall)
Robertson,SirG.Scott (Bradf'rd
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Ronaldshay, Earl of
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W.W. (Liverpool)
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, A.H.(Ashton under Lyne
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seddon, J.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheffield,Sir BerkeleyGeorge D.
Smith, F.E. (Liverpool,Walton)
Snowden, P.
Stanley,Hon.Arthur (Ormskirk
Starkey, John R.
Staveley-Hill, Henry (Staff'sh.
Summerbell, T.
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thomson,W.Mitchell- (Lanark)
Thorne, William
Thornton, Percy M.
Turnour, Viscount
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Walsh, Stephen
Warde, Col. C. E. (Kent, Mid)
Wardle, George J.
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Wilkie, Alexander
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson,A.Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Young, Samuel
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Harold Cox and Mr. Cowan.

NOES.

Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Armitage, R.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith,Rt.Hon.HerbertHenry
Astbury, John Meir
Atherley-Jones, L.
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring,Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Sir John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, Redmond J.(Tyrone,N.)
Beale, W. P.
Beaumont, Hon. Hubert
Bellairs, Carlyon
Belloc, Hilaire Joseph Peter R.
Benn,SirJ.Williams (Devonp'rt
Benn,W.(T'w'r Hamlets,S.Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell,SirJ.H. (Essex,Romf'rd
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Black, Arthur W.
Boulton, A. C. F.
Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner,J.F.L. (Lancs.,Leigh)
Brunner,RtHnSirJ.T(Cheshire)
Bryce, J. Annan
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, W. J. D.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt.Hn. SydneyCharles
Byles, William Pollard
Carns, Thomas
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton,Rt.Hn.RichardKnight
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Churchill, Rt. Hon. Winston S.
Cleland, J. W.
Coats, SirT.Glen (Renfrew, W,)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins,SirWm.J.(S.Pancras,W.
Corbett,CH (Sussex,E.Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Criga, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crosfield, A. H.
Crossley, William J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, David(Montgomery Co.
Davies, Ellis William (Eifion)
Davies, M. Vaughan- (Cardigan
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dewar, Sir J. A. (Invesness-sh.
Dickinson,W.H. (St.Pancras,N
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dobson, Thomas W.
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne,MajorE.Martin(Walsall)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Sir Francis (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Essex, R. W.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Evans, Samuel T.
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Freeman-Thomas, Freeman
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)

Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Grove, Archibald
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon,RtHn. SirW.Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harmsworth,R.L. (Caithn'ss-sh
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harvey,W.E. (Derbyshire,N.E.
Harwood, George
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemmerde, Edward George
Henderson,J.M. (Aberdeen,W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Col.Sir Ivor (Mon., S.)
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Holland, Sir William Henry
Holt, Richard Durning
Hope,W.Bateman(Somerset,N.
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jackson, R. S.
Jacoby, Sir James Alfred
Jardine, Sir J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones,Sir D. Brynmor(Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
Laidlaw, Robert
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese,SirJoseph F.(Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever,A.Levy (Essex, Harwich
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald,J.M. (Falkirk B'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald
M'Laren H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln)
Marks,G.Croydon (Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alport
Mond, A.
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. G.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholson,Charles N.(Doncast'r
Norman, Sir Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pearson,W.H.M. (Suffolk, Eye)
Perks, Robert William
Philipps,Col.Ivor (S'thampton
Philipps,J.Wynford (Pembroke
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pollard, Dr.
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Price,RobertJohn (Norfolk,E.)
Priestley, Arthur (Grantham)
Pullar, Sir Robert
Radford, G. H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro')
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Richardson, A.
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Rt.Hn. E. (Dundee)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann,SirC.E. (Manchester)
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley,Hn. A.Lyulph(Chesh.)
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant,Sir Edward (Salisbury
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas,Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomasson, Franklin
Thompson, J.W.H.(Somerset,E
Tillett, Louis John
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Vivian, Henry
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walters, John Tudor
Walton, Sir John L. (Leeds, S.)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Ward,W.Dudley (Southampton
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason,Rt.Hn.E.(Clackmannan
Wason,John Cathcart (Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, Henry A.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Whitbread, Howard
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams,Llewelyn (Carmarth'n
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williamson, A.
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, Hon. C.H.W.(Hull, W.)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, J.W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

*Mr. HICKS BEACH (Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury) moved the following new clause—

> "In addition to the deductions of one-eighth and one-sixth allowed under Section 35 of the Finance Act of 1894, there shall also, for the purposes of collection, be allowed the cost of insurance and a deduction for expenses of management not exceeding five per centum of the gross annual value."

He said that the result which had just been announced seemed to have come as a surprise to hon. Gentlemen opposite, and, therefore, they might be inclined to accept his very modest Amendment. For a long time past there had been a great deal more income-tax paid under Schedule A than those who were liable were really bound to pay. He was sure that no landlords objected to pay their fair share of the general taxation of the country, but they had come to realise that in the last few years they had been paying, not only their fair share, but a very considerable sum in excess of the amount that they ought fairly to pay under Schedule A. Under that schedule the taxpayer was charged on the gross annual value of his property, save for infinitesimal deductions which were authorsied by the Income-tax Acts, namely, the land tax and embankment and drainage rates. The embankment rates were practically of an infinitesimal character, and did not come into the account of most estates. Then there was the allowance of one-sixth on buildings and one-eighth on land under the Finance Act of 1894. Anyone who had studied the management and upkeep of estates must recognise that those deductions by no means covered the cost of upkeep and allowed nothing at all towards the expense of management. In the case of two estates he had calculated the amount of the income-tax they had paid for the last nine years. The average rate of the income-tax had been 11·11d. in the £, and on one of these estates the average rate in the pound paid on the net rental without deducting anything for the cost of management amounted to 12·38d. On the other estate for the same period the rate was 13·55d. In other words that meant that the owners of those two estates in the first case had paid during those nine years an excess of 1·27d. in the pound in excess of the net rental, and in the second case an excess of 2·44d. There was another case of a similar estate upon which during the last five years the average rate of the income-tax was 12·3d., and the amount paid in the pound on the net rental by the owner——

DEATH OF SIR A. BILLSON.

At this point—

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN rose and said: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Member, but I have a painful duty to perform. A Member of this House has been taken ill in the immediate precincts of this Chamber, and has, I regret to say, succumbed to the attack of illness with which he was seized. In these circumstances, I think it is right that I should move that you, Sir, do report progress. I remember a case many years ago when a similar course was followed when a Member of the House died in the library; and I think in this case as in that, when a colleague is removed from among us in this striking and startling manner, it is right and proper that we should adjourn. I will not say anything on this occasion as to the loss we have sustained. He was a strenuous Member of this House, a keen politician, and as a man universally respected. The best course we can follow now is to report progress.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Chairman do report Progress; and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman*)—put, and agreed to.

Committee report Progress; to sit again to-morrow.

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Whiteley*)—put, and agreed to.

Adjourned at fourteen minutes before Eleven o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Wednesday, 10*th July*, 1907.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Kingston-upon-Hull Corporation Bill. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

King Edward's Hospital Fund for London Bill [H.L.]; Heywood and Middleton Water Board Bill [H.L.]. Commons' Amendments considered and agreed to.

Central London Railway Bill. Moved, That the order made on the 20th day of March last, "That no Private Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after the 18th day of June next," be dispensed with, and that the Bill be now read 2^{a}; agreed to: Bill read 2^{a} accordingly, and committed.

Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Bill [H.L.]. Amendments reported (according to order), and Bill to be read 3^{a} To-morrow.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill. [No. 106]; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 12) Bill. [No. 107]; Local Government Provisional Order (No. 15) Bill. [No. 108.] Brought from the Commons. Read 1^{a}; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill; Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill [H.L.]; Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill [H.L.]. House in Committee (according to order). The Amendments proposed by the Committee made; Standing Committee negatived. The Report of Amendments to be received To-morrow.

Portobello and Musselburgh Tramways (Levenhall Extension) Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^{a} (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

COLONIES—ANNUAL.

No. 527. Ceylon.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES.

Report of the Departmental Committee appointed to inquire into the accounts of local authorities.

Vol. I. Report.

Vol. II. Minutes of evidence; with digest of evidence and index to evidence.

TREATY SERIES.

No. 16. (1907.) Convention between the United Kingdom and Belgium supplementing Article XIV. of the Treaty of Extradition of 29th October, 1901; signed at London, 5th March, 1907. (Ratifications exchanged at London, 17th April, 1907.)

No. 17. (1907.) Agreement between the United Kingdom and the Republic of Costa Rica for the exchange of postal money orders; signed at San José de Costa Rica, 26th April, 1907.

TRADE REPORTS—MISCELLANEOUS SERIES.

No. 662. (Imports into Mexico from the United Kingdom and Germany.)

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Orders made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and confirmed by the Board of Trade—

I. Amending the East Sussex Light Railway Orders, 1901 and 1905.

II. Reviving the powers granted and extending the periods limited by the Central Essex Light Railway Orders, 1901 to 1905, for the compulsory purchase of lands and extending the periods limited by those orders for the completion of the railways and works thereby authorised.

Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the Wolverhampton and Cannock Chase Railway Company to construct and work their authorised railways as a light railway under the Light Railways Act, 1896, and for other purposes.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

SUPERANNUATION.

Treasury Minute, dated 5th July, 1907, declaring that for the due and efficient discharge of the duties of the office of Director of the National Galleries of Scotland professional or other peculiar qualifications not ordinarily to be acquired on the public service are required: Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

BOARD OF EDUCATION (ROYSTON NON-PROVIDED SCHOOL).

Return of official correspondence relating to the appeal of the managers of the Royston Church of England School against the refusal of the local education authority to consent to the appointment of Mr. O. B. Milnes as head teacher of the school: Laid before the House (pursuant to order of the 27th of June last), and to be printed. (No. 103.)

PALACE OF WESTMINSTER.

Report from the Select Committee (with the proceedings of the Committee) made, and to be printed. (No. 104.) Minutes of evidence, together with an appendix, laid upon the Table, and to be delivered out.

THE MERCHANT SERVICE.

Lord MUSKERRY: My Lords, I rise to call attention to the alleged shortage of officers engaged in the merchant service; to the conditions under which those officers labour; to a resolution adopted at the last annual meeting of the Chamber of Shipping, calling upon the Board of Trade to remove any obstacles and give greater facilities to men desiring to obtain certificates of competency as second officers; to a proposal of the Liverpool Steamship Owners' Association that the qualifying time for a second officer's certifiate be reduced from four to three years; and to ask what attitude the Board of Trade propose to adopt on these several matters.

I am calling attention to this subject, not so much in the interests of British shipowners—who are well able to look after their own interests—but in the interests of the country, of safety of life at sea, of the further development of our shipping trade, and in the interests of those who devote themselves to a hard life at sea. Though we are getting nearer to it every day, we seem, as yet, far from able to realise the importance to the nation of our merchant service and of those engaged in it. Our food supply mainly depends upon it; our Army depends upon it for transport, and without it our troops are useless for operations outside these islands; our ships in the Royal Navy and our Naval depots abroad depend on it for coal and all other supplies, whilst in its officers and men we have a Reserve which is certain to be called on whenever we are engaged in a maritime war. Therefore, when we hear of a shortage of officers in our merchant service it is, I venture to think, a subject which should be brought to your Lordships' notice. I say this more especially as the schemes which are mooted for the purpose of creating an artificial supply will tend to produce large numbers of inefficient and inexperienced officers, and this would greatly endanger life at sea.

When we are travelling on the high seas we entrust our lives to the care of the captain or officer on the bridge. We naturally expect that he is fully competent, careful, and, above all, an experienced and resourceful navigator. But if we allow these so-called schemes, proposing to make it much more easy to obtain certificates of competency, to slip through, we shall find that we have, without a protest, reduced the standard of safety and lessened the efficiency of those who, as officers of merchant vessels, have such serious responsibilities vested in them so far as life and property are concerned. It is this attempt to tamper with efficient and safe navigation that has caused the Merchant Service Guild to address emphatic protests to the Board of Trade.

I understand that the proposal of the Liverpool Steamship Owners' Association is to reduce the period of qualifying time for a second officer's certificate from four to three years. I hope that the Board of Trade will not entertain this proposal for a single moment. It is a very serious change of front that the British shipowner, who hitherto has always required men of experience, should now urge that three years training is sufficient to enable a youth to become a full-fledged officer and take his place on the bridge with many lives in his hands. Then, again, the Chamber of Shipping, which is the representative body of British shipowners, requests the Board of Trade to remove obstacles and give greater facilities for second mates—the lowest certificated grade—to obtain such certificates. I trust that the Board of Trade are not going to allow themselves to be hoodwinked in this matter, and lend their aid to methods and schemes which are proposed, not in the interests of safety or efficiency, as we have that already, but for the purpose of once more glutting the market with captains and officers who will have to accept employment on any conditions.

We have a striking contrast to the present attitude of the British shipowner when we turn to Japan, where cadets for the mercantile marine are drawn from the most successful scholars in the higher schools. Two and a-half years they must spend at the Imperial National College at Tokio, and they receive there thorough instruction in navigation and seamanship. Then there is six months in gunnery training at the naval depot, from whence the youths proceed to a Japanese seagoing training ship for two years. Then a further six months must be spent on a steamship. It therefore takes them five and a-half years before they can pass for second officer, and, on doing so, they are entered in the Naval Reserve. Japan has lately taught a lesson in maritime war to the world. When war is going on between other countries we send accredited representatives of our forces to learn the lessons of failure and success. But what I would like to know is, do we ever send representatives to ascertain what part the merchant services of other countries play during the struggle? I venture to think that inquiries would show that Japan's merchant service officers proved a very valuable asset at the time to which I allude.

Reverting to our own service, I may say that our shipowners have now got hold of the wrong end of the stick. They will never do any good for themselves or their interests by promoting a a large supply of immature officers. The plain fact is that owing to their treatment of captains and officers in past years, the calling of the sea has become absolutely discredited so far as its conditions are concerned. It seems a pity to have to say it, but we cannot ignore facts, and the difficulty is best solved by looking them square in the face. Niggardly pay, inferior, insufficient, and perhaps insanitary accommodation, no guarantee of continuous employment, dismissals for trivial or no reasons, unjust suspensions of certificates, no leave from their arduous duties, continuous labour from day to day and night to night, frequent Sunday labour, long absences from home and friends and families, absence of proper rest through an insufficiency of officers on board—many ships carry only two officers—these and other reasons, combined with the fact that a good deal of the romance of the sea is dead, are responsible for the present position of which British shipowners complain.

Had I no regard for your Lordships' patience, I could give at great length the actual experiences of captains and officers which have been placed in my hands merely as samples, and which show what bad treatment members of the nautical profession receive. The existence of the Imperial Merchant Service Guild to-day is for no other reason than that members of the profession, tired of hoping for proper consideration, joined in forming an organisation which, I am glad to say, has succeeded in doing an immense amount of good for them. But there is much more to be done, and it is for the Legislature and for British shipowners to co-operate in the work.

If your Lordships will allow me, I will refer to a few instances of the treatment of merchant service captains and officers. A case has lately come to my notice where a captain of a sailing vessel arrived home after a voyage of over four years. The size of the ship was over 2,000 tons and the owners, who are well known, assess his pay at £12 10s. per month, or we may say £3 3s. a week, whilst they deduct 15s. per week for the time his wife was on board. One of the leading shipowners on the north-east coast and a gentleman well-known in Parliamentary circles pays the masters of some of his large steamers at the rate of £13 per month, making them find their own charts, which are pretty expensive, and return to the owners all gratuities and commissions they may receive. From £15 to £16 per month is very common pay for masters of large vessels, and an accident usually means that they must start elsewhere as an officer at £6 to £7 per month. I have a letter from an officer who says—

> "One hears a lot at present about the scarcity of officers, but I am thinking it is a bit of a fairy tale, for I can assure you for the last two months during which I have been out and looking for employment, I have come across a good number who are in the same position as myself at present."

Quite recently, eight masters in the steamers of one of the leading and largest firms in the country threw up their positions and returned home rather than submit to the treatment they received. An announcement recently appeared in the Press to the effect that they had increased the pay of their officers all round, and the new rates were given. This has been a paper increase, as I am advised that in most cases the increase is conspicuous by its absence. As showing how little shipowners have advanced with the times in the matter of remuneration I may tell your Lordships that, according to official figures, and despite all the wonderful developments in connection with merchant ships, both in regard to size and the immense amount of additional work which has to be carried on on board of them by our merchant officers at the present time, their pay is much as it was twenty-five years ago.

A subject which I have previously brought to your Lordships' notice is that of accommodation provided on board for officers. In most cases, both in liners and other vessels, the accommodation provided for officers is very inferior. I have been looking over the annual report lately issued by Dr. Howard Jones, Medical Officer of Health for the port of Newport, Monmouthshire. These are certain observations in an extract from this Report referring to merchant ships. Dr. Jones says—

> "After the vessels have been passed by the Board of Trade and arrive at a British port during a voyage, they come under the observation of the Port Sanitary Authority, and it is not an uncommon occurrence for the latter to insist on structural alterations, in order to remedy nuisances soon after being passed by the Board of Trade. This is naturally a source of annoyance and expense to the owners, and an unpleasant duty on the part of the Port Sanitary Officials. . . . Officers' quarters also frequently exhibit gross errors in design in this respect; as will be seen by the following example:—
>
> > "'January 27th, S.S.M.—I—, newly launched. The officers' quarters afforded accommodation for nine officers, etc; one w.c. adjoining captain's cabin, and separated from latter by thin matchboard partition, which allowed test gases to pass between the boards freely.'"

As illustrating the work that an officer is expected to perform, I have before me the case of an officer of a large steamer in receipt of £8 per month as pay. The steamer being at anchor, this officer had been tallying cargo from 8 a.m. until 10 p.m., or rather, by the time he had seen that hatches were on and attended to other details, it was 11 p.m. On the following day he had to start work at 6 a.m. and tally cargo until 8.30 a.m.; after half an hour for breakfast he continued tallying until about 1 p.m. After an interval of an hour for dinner the tallying was carried on till 6 p.m., and after tea the work was proceeded with until 11.30 p.m., when this officer and the third officer were told that they would have to keep on working watch and watch—that is, one would require to relieve the other every four hours. In the steamers which carry two officers only—and there are very many—the approximate amount of duty an officer must put in per diem is something like fourteen or fifteen hours. In ports abroad, or where vessels are engaged in trading between a large number of ports only shortly removed from each other—such, for instance, as the Mediterranean trade—the physical strain imposed upon the officers in regard to hours of labour is intolerable, and whilst stevedores and others engaged in the work of cargo, as also seamen and firemen, are paid overtime, this, in practically all cases, does not apply to the officers.

I have a letter by me from a member of the profession, who speaks of his trade being one where they load out for five to eight ports and take others for loading homewards, frequently touching at twelve to fifteen ports in a six weeks voyage. This gentleman, who is a shipmaster, says that on Sunday work is becoming more and more prevalent instead of less, and though the owners in this case pay overtime, thereby setting an example to many other lines of ships, yet it is said that the two officers of this particular ship are frequently very fagged when the ship is ready for sea. It does not say very much for the sea as a lucrative profession when we see officers with extra masters' certificates, Royal Naval Reserve commissions, and other qualifications, who have been four or five years in leading lines and whose total service at sea has been probably ten or twelve years, earning the munificent remuneration of £8 per month, with expensive uniform to provide.

We should remember that "tramp" steamers—the word "tramp" is a very unfortunate and misleading appellation—represent over 80 per cent. of the shipping industry. It is not only in these, but in almost all the large lines that officers bitterly complain of their treatment. Promotion is very slow, their pay is poor and certainly not what it should be having regard to their enormous responsibilities, they are relegated to take their meals in inferior mess-rooms, lodged probably amongst steerage passengers and humiliated in other ways. They must provide themselves with expensive uniform, and altogether the lot of the "liner" officer is very different from what people imagine when they see him in uniform on the bridge or about the decks.

I say remove all this discontent and give proper inducements for the right sort of boy to enter on a sea life and the shipowner need never fear for an adequate supply of officers in the future. And let him treat them as men and as gentlemen and his interests will be well rewarded. The Merchant Service Guild tell me that it is no uncommon thing to lay courteous representations before firms of shipowners which do not elicit even an acknowledgment. This sort of thing is not calculated to make things better or to promote that kindly feeling between employer and employee which is so desirable. Furthermore, I have it on the authority of the Guild that there is no real lack of officers. They inform me that for any position where, say, £8 or £9 per month is offered, any number of suitable officers can be had. Surely if such small pay as this can command an ample supply there is not much basis for the cry about a shortage of officers.

I hope to hear that the Board of Trade will unhesitatingly oppose any proposals which will tamper with the efficiency and safety of merchant ships. We require to maintain capable and highly experienced captains and officers in them such as we have now. It will be an ill day for this country when we reduce the standard in this respect, and thus not only still further endanger life at sea, but play into the hands of other maritime Powers whose fierce competition appears to be of such great moment to the British shipowners at the present time.

*THE EARL OF GRANARD: My Lords, I am sure we all admit our indebtedness to the merchant service in the building up of this great Empire and for their valuable services during the South African war. With regard to the points raised by the noble Lord, the Board of Trade are inclined to agree that there is no shortage of officers. There may be some slight shortage in the coasting trade, in regard to which we have received complaints from junior officers, especially as to the rate of pay and Sunday work, but the Board do not think that that condition is very prevalent in the foreign trade. I can give a very simple answer to the noble Lord's inquiry as to the intention of the Board of Trade with regard to the examination for second-mate's certificates. The Board have no intention whatever of departing from the present rule as to sea service before a man is able to take out his certificate. He will still have to serve four years at sea before he can go up for his second mate's certificate, though the rule is somewhat modified in the case of boys serving in the training ships "Conway" and "Worcester," who can sit for their certificates after three years. As I am on this point I may inform your Lordships that though the number of second-mate certificates taken out has shown a decrease in recent years, yet while in 1905 only 616 such certificates were issued, last year this number had increased to 759. With regard to the training of boys for the British mercantile marine, a Committee is now sitting at the Board of Trade with the object of, if possible, evolving some plan by which boys of British nationality may be more attracted to the sea. It seems to me that the only way to get boys for this purpose is to make the following of the sea attractive. Until that is done I am afraid we shall find it very hard to increase the number of British subjects serving in our mercantile marine.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH: My Lords, I was exceedingly glad to hear so satisfactory an answer from the noble Earl who represents the Board of Trade. I confess I was under some apprehension that the qualification, as tested by examination, of second mate officers was to be reduced. Such a course would have increased the dangers of navigation. I agree that there is no shortage of officers. There is, however, among many shipowners a shortage of inducements both to enter and to remain in the service, and that ought not to be met by any reduction of the standard of examination.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My Lords, I think the Answer of the noble Earl was a satisfactory one, and I rise merely for the purpose of expressing my hope that the Board of Trade will adhere to their attitude, and be extremely careful not in any way to relax their requirements in regard to the efficiency and competency of these officers. The matter, as the noble Lord who brought this subject to our notice this evening truly said, is not one which we ought to consider merely from the point of view either of officers or shipowners. It is a question which concerns the carrying trade of the country and the lives of all who serve in these ships or travel on board of them. It is, therefore, of great Imperial moment. I understand that the shipowners allege a shortage of officers, and are putting pressure on the Board of Trade to obtain relaxation of the conditions on which the Board of Trade have insisted. On the other side it is urged—and, so far as I can make out, with much force—that this shortage does not exist, or is not so serious as has been represented, and that the inducements offered to young men to join the service have not improved in the same degree as those in other professions. I must say that some figures which have been shown to me seem to support the latter contention. I hope we shall bear in mind that the carrying trade of this country is a matter of the greatest possible moment, and that nothing will be done which might, directly or indirectly, tend to diminish the efficiency of the mercantile service of these islands.

IRISH EVICTED TENANTS.

THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE rose to move for a Return giving the names of the evicted tenants in Ireland whom His Majesty's Government intend to restore, the date of their eviction, a statement as to whether they were or were not Plan of Campaign tenants, whether they were judicial tenants or not, the amount of rent in arrear when they were evicted, the name of the landlord, and the townland, parish, barony, and county in which their holdings were situated.

The noble Earl said: My Lords, I venture to call your attention this evening for a few moments to a very important subject, but not one which His Majesty's Government considered of sufficient importance to be mentioned in the King's Speech at the opening of Parliament, although that Speech contained references of more than usual importance to Ireland. The Motion has been on the Paper for a considerable time, and was put down before the introduction of the Evicted Tenants Bill in another place, to which I have no intention of referring; I do not propose to criticise the machinery of of that measure or to comment on the debates in the other House, though I am very much tempted to do so by the speech delivered by the new Vice-President of the Irish Board of Agriculture upon the Second Reading, which contained some of the most fantastic statements about this matter I have ever heard. I do not wish, however, to anticipate a debate that may very likely take place in this House later on in the session, though according to the progress His Majesty's Government are making with business in another place I do not think we are likely to receive the Bill until well on towards the end of September.

Your Lordships will remember that considerable notice was taken of the question of the evicted tenants in 1903 during the passing of the Irish Land Act of that year, and we are told that in that year a bargain was entered into for the restoration of the evicted tenants. But I do not think that some of the speakers who have raised the question of this bargain have entirely recollected what the nature of that bargain was. We are asked to believe that the bargain was that the evicted tenants were to be restored; we are almost asked to believe that that was the primary object of the Act of 1903, and we are accused of having broken that bargain.

Now, what was the bargain? It originated in a paragraph in the Land Conference Report saying that any project for the solution of the Irish land question should be accompanied by a settlement of the evicted tenants question upon an equitable basis. Your Lorships will notice the words "should be accompanied." It was distinctly agreed that the solution of this question should proceed *pari passu* with the solution of the whole land question. There was no suggestion that this question was to be settled in priority to all others; nor was it suggested that any inconvenience was to be caused to landowners or to other tenants by the settling of the question. The settlement was to proceed on voluntary lines, and upon the giving of, to quote the words of the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, an honest price. I think we in Ireland have very great reason to be grateful to the Lord Chancellor for the use of that phrase, but I do not think that His Majesty's Government will be very pleased by the end of the session that the phrase was ever used. I am perfectly certain that some of their supporters will be extremely angry that it was used, because nearly the whole of the agitation which is now going on in Ireland has for its object the avoidance of an honest price.

We stated in 1903 that we had no objection to the restoration of evicted tenants, but we claimed that the restoration should be undertaken only on estates where sales were taking place; and that fact was recognised by the Government of the day, as is shown by the Regulation made by the Lord-Lieutenant to the effect that—

> "The Estates Commissioners should only consider the question of providing a holding for a tenant evicted from any holding comprised in an estate, upon the sale of that estate."

That condition carried out the undertaking accepted on all sides in 1903, and it was broken by Mr. Bryce, who entirely on his own initiative altered the Regulation so as to remove the limitation.

The second condition of the bargain was that the process should be entirely voluntary. Sections 2 and 8 of the Act under which these proceedings take place state quite clearly that parcels of land may be purchased for, among other purposes, the benefit of evicted tenants, and it was made quite clear that no loss was to be incurred by the landlord and that no pressure was to be brought on the landlord or on any other tenant. This part of the bargain has not been kept. It is common knowledge in Ireland that pressure is being brought to bear on landlords by the Estates Commissioners to restore their evicted tenants, under the threat that if they do not their estate will not be declared an estate and that they will not therefore obtain their share of the bonus. And whether that is so or not, we all know that it is the intention of His Majesty's Government to break through this second condition of the bargain by legislation.

The third condition of the bargain was, in our opinion, equally important. We made it quite clear that whilst we would aid in the restoration of evicted tenants we would take no share in the dispossessing of those who had come forward during the bad times and assisted us by taking their places; and my noble friend Lord Westmeath, I remember, moved an Amendment to that effect while the Bill was passing through Committee in your Lordship's House, and it was one of the few important points on which we, the Irish landlords, failed to beat the Government. But, although we failed to get these words inserted in the Bill, we obtained declarations from the Government of the day which left absolutely no room for misunderstanding. Mr. Wyndham stated in the House of Commons that the landlords' representatives had dwelt on the necessity of allowing nothing in the Bill to bring pressure to bear, directly or indirectly, on men who had taken up holdings which others had left; and to that he agreed. That position was accepted by Mr. Redmond a few days later; and the words used by the noble Marquess behind me, Lord Lansdowne, were that—

> "He would be sorry to be a party to any arrangement which contemplated their abandonment and their exclusion from the holdings they now occupied."

Those were the three main features of the bargain. The first has been repudiated by the Government, the second the Government intend to repudiate, and I cannot help thinking that they would be glad to repudiate the third if they dared.

It is complained that the process of restoration under the Act of 1903 has been too slow. But it has gone on faster than that of dealing with estates, for it is stated in the special Report by the Estates Commissioners of their proceedings up to

31st May last that the total number of evicted tenants, or other representatives, who have been restored to their former holdings or provided with new holdings up to date is 1,033, out of a total number of claims that the Government seem to have admitted of about 3,040. That rate of progress is slightly faster than the proportion of estates dealt with to estates in connection with which originating agreements have been lodged. And remember that the bargain was that the evicted tenants should be reinstated *pari passu* with sales as a whole. There is a remarkable paragraph in this Report in which the Estates Commissioners give their reasons for their failure. They say (paragraph 40)—

> "The purchase of untenanted land under the powers given by the Act of 1903 is necessarily slow, inasmuch as it depends on the consent of the owner and proof of title to the purchase money."

I would ask permission for a moment to examine those reasons.

First, there is delay in administering the Act. Whose fault is that? It is the fault of the Government of the day in the first place, and, I suppose, of the Estates Commissioners in the second place. But is that any reason for breaking up the bargain which was acquiesced in by all parties in 1903? What is the next reason? It is that it is difficult to purchase untenanted land because it depends on the consent of the owner. Is that not left rather vague in the hope that the public will assume that owners have been recalcitrant in selling land? What is the real position? Not a single owner, at any rate but a very small percentage of owners—I have not heard of a case—have refused to sell untenanted land which was not part of their demesne if offered an honest price. But, as a matter of fact, the Estates Commissioners will not offer what I would describe as the market price of the day for the land.

I will cite a case within my own personal experience where a considerable piece of untenanted land was offered to the Estates Commissioners by a landlord for the purpose now under discussion. The landlord said to the Estates Commissioners—

> "I approve of the policy of reinstating evicted tenants. The grazing tenants on this land are prepared to buy it at a certain price—at the price I want. But in my anxiety to help you I am ready to let you have this land over their heads for the same price, because I consider it is public policy to assist you in this matter if I can."

The offer of the Estates Commissioners, given three or four months ago, was 25 per cent. below the price which the grazing tenants were ready to give, and 25 per cent., therefore, below the market price, or the honest price, to use the words of the Lord Chancellor. The Estates Commissioners cannot expect to buy grazing land, which is generally the best land in the district, unless they are prepared to give the price that the present grazing tenants are ready to pay. I am perfectly certain that there are other cases which could be produced from all over Ireland in which the Estates Commissioners have not been ready to give a fair price to the landlord, and, if that is so, it is not, I think, quite fair to state in a public document that the difficulty of obtaining untenanted land is complicated by the fact that so much depends upon the consent of the owner.

What is the position now? The number of claims have very greatly increased. At the time of the Mathew Commission in 1893 they had before them claims amounting in all to 3,639; the claims now which we understand have been made amount to 8,401. Since 1903 1,033 evicted tenants have been reinstated, and 2,000 more will have to be reinstated—a total of 3,033. Therefore it comes to this, that we are asked to believe that of the claims that were submitted to the Mathew Commission 83 per cent. were genuine. I believe nothing of the kind. If you have restored 1,033 tenants under this Act I do not believe another 2,000 genuine cases can be produced. That is why I have ventured to move the Motion standing in my name. The Government have all the information to hand. On page 10 of this Report appears a form—the form of application furnished to persons seeking reinstatement as evicted tenants or their representatives—which practically gives all the information for which I have asked, and such being the case I hope the Government will consent to grant the Return.

The suggestion has been offered that if the Government published the names of the claims that were considered genuine now, they would get into awful trouble with their Irish supporters in the other House. But this state of things cannot go on for ever, and it would be much better to know now what claims were genuine and what were not. The Irish landlords are anxious to help the Government in restoring every genuine case under the terms of the bargain made in 1903. I realise also that the Government are in a difficult position. The failure of their Irish Council Bill has led to an estrangement among the Government, their supporters, and the Nationalists, and it has lowered the credit of the Nationalists in Ireland. It seems to be thought, however, that the proposals of the Government as to evicted tenants may be the means of re-establishing the old friendly relations, and that if the Bill were passed something would be done to rehabilitate the credit of the Nationalist leaders in Ireland. If it is the object of the Government to lend themselves to the support of such results I can understand that they will refuse the Return asked for. But if they are really anxious honestly to go forward with the arrangement of 1903 they can scarcely object to grant my request. I can promise, on behalf of my fellow-landlords, that we will continue to do our best to expedite the policy in which the Government are interested in accordance with the arrangements made four years ago.

Moved, "That there be laid before the House a Return giving the names of the evicted tenants in Ireland whom His Majesty's Government intend to restore, the date of their eviction, a statement as to whether they were or were not Plan of Campaign tenants, whether they were judicial tenants or not, the amount of rent in arrear when they were evicted, the name of the landlord, and the townland, parish, barony, and county in which their holdings were situated."—(*The Earl of Donoughmore.*)

*LORD DENMAN: My Lords, in the effective speech to which we have just listened the noble Earl has stated some reasons, but not, after all, very many, why the Return for which he has asked should be laid on the Table. He dealt, in the course of his speech, with very many matters which are not strictly relevant to the Question he has placed on the Paper. He dealt with the Land Act of 1903, with what the Lord Chancellor had said, with what Mr. Bryce had done, with the Irish Council Bill, and with many other matters; and I would like to point out that a good many of the statements he made and the arguments he used would have been at least equally appropriate to the Second Reading stage of the Evicted Tenants Bill when that measure reaches your Lordships' House.

One thing the noble Earl said did particularly depress me. He expressed the opinion that the Evicted Tenants Bill would not reach this House until the end of September. I hope for all our sakes that that was a pessimistic and gloomy view to take, and that we shall have an opportunity of discussing that measure at any rate before the autumn is reached. I am not, of course, complaining because the noble Earl has chosen to go rather far afield from the Question on the Paper, as I know that is generally the custom in this House; but if the Committee on Procedure which is now sitting does in its Report recommend that discussion should be more strictly relevant to the Question on the Paper, and if your Lordships think fit to adopt that particular portion of the Report, I am sure no one will be more grateful than the individual, whoever he may be, who has the privilege—I suppose privilege is the right word—to be the unofficial representative of the Irish Office in your Lordships' House.

As regards the notice on the Paper, over 8,000 cases have been investigated by the Estates Commissioners, and it is estimated that some 2,000 of these will be reinstated under the Bill. The Government are unable to comply with the Motion of the noble Lord for the simple reason that it would enormously increase the difficult and the onerous task which the Estates Commissioners have already in hand. It is perfectly obvious that were we to publish the names of those 2,000 comparatively speaking fortunate people, naturally the Department would receive bitter complaints from the 5,000 or more persons whose applications had to be refused. They would compare their cases with that of those who were more fortunate than themselves. In other words, the thing would lead to endless commotion and disturbance. I am under the impression that there are plenty of people in Ireland already who have a grievance, and if we acceded to the Motion of the noble Earl we should immediately add an enormous number to that category. It is impossible for us to do business in this way. There is no desire for secrecy, but we have to adopt this course in order that we may expedite the policy of the Government of Ireland. Suppose we were to publish those names, then the 8,000 cases would have to be reopened. In the majority of cases I have no doubt they would have to be heard again. If only two hours were spent on each particular case, the labour entailed would amount to the work of years. Therefore, we say that the matter must be left to the discretion of the Estates Commissioners, who are skilled in this particular class of work.

The noble Earl expressed the belief that a large proportion of the 2,000 cases are not genuine; in other words, he implied that the Estates Commissioners are not an impartial tribunal to adjudicate upon this question. As noble Lords from Ireland know, the Estates Commissioners are three in number, and owing to the large duties which they were given under the Land Act of 1903, a considerable amount of attention has been directed to their individual opinions on political matters. One of these gentlemen, Mr. Wrench, is commonly known as a landlords' man, and Mr. Bailey is, I believe, known as a tenants' man. The third Commissioner, Mr. Finucane, was a distinguished Indian Civil Servant, and has a very high record of service, having served for over thirty years with great distinction in that part of the Empire. I cannot see what ground there is for impugning the impartiality of these three gentlemen.

THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE: I do not think I said anything which could be taken as impugning their impartiality. What I said was that I did not think there were 2,000 genuine cases remaining. It has been the common opinion in Ireland for years that the number of cases was very much less than 3,033.

*LORD DENMAN: I am glad to hear that disclaimer, but when the noble Earl said that a large number of these cases were not genuine, it did appear that he was making an attack upon the Commissioners. I am glad to hear that that is not so. I would remind the House that these gentlemen were appointed by the late Government to do almost identically similar work to that which they are now performing, and which they are performing in relation to the question of evicted tenants. As the noble Earl has mentioned the special Report which they have lately made, I would point out that they have all three signed the Report, and, so far as I know, they have been in complete agreement on the matter.

Then the noble Earl raised the general question of the policy of His Majesty's Government. I do not intend to go into that; it would perhaps, be hardly appropriate for me to do so in the subordinate position which I hold in relation to this matter. But I should like to call the attention of the House to some remarks which were made by a very distinguished authority on the subject when the Land Act of 1903 was before Parliament. He put it very concisely. He said—

> "In dealing with the category of those who once had an occupying tendency in land and lost it, they must not stop to inquire for what reason, or under what circumstances, they lost their tenancies. They could not pick out here and there those who were misguided, others who had been fraudulent, and others who had been misled. If they did they were raking up the past. They must look beyond this, that it was desirable, if they could, to give these men another chance."

THE EARL OF MAYO: Who said that?

* LORD DENMAN: Mr. Wyndham in the House of Commons when the Act of 1903 was before Parliament. That is exactly the policy of the Government to-day—to give these men another chance. It very often happens in the stress of modern life that men do not get another chance; but if hardship, suffering, and privation do give them a claim upon the sympathy of those whose lot in life has fallen in pleasanter places, then I believe there are no class of men to whom the average Englishman would more readily hold out a helping hand than the evicted tenants of Ireland.

* LORD ASHBOURNE: My Lords, the noble Lord who has just sat down invited your Lordships, in the closing

words of his speech, to express sympathy with the evicted tenants in Ireland. I am not aware that my noble friend who moved this Motion said anything calculated to show a lack of sympathy with these tenants or of a desire that relief should be given to those who fairly came within that category. While sympathising with the evicted tenants and desiring to see a fair measure of relief given there should be no mistake as to the issues involved in this matter. It is said that we must trust to the discretion of the Estates Commissioners. We fully recognise, of course, that they are honourable men, and we are prepared to trust their discretion in a reasonable way. But now it is proposed to make the discretion of the Commissioners boundless, in a way never contemplated when the Act of 1903 was passed. The Return already furnished is interesting and, so far as it goes, valuable; but it is not complete, and it needs supplementing. And with reference to the objection that the Return asked for would entail work, surely it is reasonable that a public Department should employ some of their public time in meeting a public demand, which is for legitimate information. There may be something in the objection to giving all the names, but there are other particulars for which we have a right to press with considerable insistence.

It is mentioned incidentally that there were seventeen Plan of Campaign estates, and that in fifteen of these the landlords have voluntarily settled. Does not that let in a flood of light as to the way in which the landlords have met the poor tenants who were duped into the action which led to their eviction? Surely it is creditable to the landlords to the last degree, and it indicates, as has been pointed out, that the landlords were willing to meet the demand, subject only to the condition that they obtained an honest price. One of the two campaign estates in connection with which there has been no settlement is the Lewis estate, county Galway, and the reason for the efforts of the Commissioners to effect a settlement proving fruitless in this case was that the representatives of the landlord said they could not afford to sell unless they were given the price which they asked. The matter was ended by the Estates Commissioners saying that they would not give that price. Surely that is a point which should be dealt with at greater length in the Report.

There has been an enormous increase year by year in the class of evicted tenants. It seems to have become a matter of business to be an evicted tenant. There are thousands of tenants in Ireland with farms of five, ten, or fifteen acres poorly equipped, and if it is declared that evicted tenants are to be given substantial farms, organised and well equipped, and have house and offices built for them, it is a great temptation to these people to become evicted tenants. Therefore it is desirable to know how the Commissioners have exercised their discretion in the past in reference to tenants who have been evicted, not only in the Plan of Campaign, but in the ordinary course of law for the non-payment of rent.

The reasons that have been given for delay are curious. In the paragraph in the Report which my noble friend Lord Donoughmore referred to the delay was attributed to the fact that the consent of the owner and proof of title to the purchase money had to be obtained; but in the earlier portion of the same paragraph it is pointed out that the evicted tenants were unwilling to take land at a distance from their former holdings. Surely it is rendered even more desirable to become an evicted tenant if the tenant is to be not only restored to a bigger farm than before and to have it equipped, but to be given the choice of where he should be placed. The Report indicates that over 2,000 claims have been rejected, and the grounds on which they have been rejected suggest to me that many people did not know where to stop in making their applications. It seemed to be generally thought that a great many elastic claims would be considered, and that one man stood as good a chance as another. I do not think that the notice which claimants were required to fill up was sufficiently precise, and I think I should have required the applicants to sign a more detailed form.

We are also entitled to know the dates of eviction; that is a date of first-class importance which it could do no harm to anyone to publish. Surely in the case of a man evicted twenty-five years before the Act of 1903 came into force, who had been all over the world and done nothing in particular ever since, it would not be reasonable to consider putting him back on the farm and displacing the occupying tenant who had probably been working, and toiling, and tilling for the past twenty years. I do not discuss that, but it is obviously desirable to have these dates for our guidance in forming a judgment. Another point on which we want information is as to what arrears—this is not confined to Plan of Campaign tenants—were due by the evicted tenant when he left the holding. Then I think it would be important to know what is the present position of the applicant, what he has been doing from the time he was evicted, whether he has been thrifty or thriftless, what he is doing now, his age, and other circumstances about him; and it would also be desirable to know whether each holding on which evicted tenants have been placed was at the time of the restoration in the possession of another tenant. The date should also be indicated when the new tenants came into possession.

This is a large question, and I submit that it does not display a want of sympathy with the evicted tenants to ask how you are going to work the Code intended for their benefit. We cannot say, except by the merest speculation, how the Estates Commissioners have exercised their great functions without the information, or a good deal of the information, for which I ask. I take things as I find them. I take the circumstances of the case now before the country, and I say that we are entitled to further information to enable us to judge how the Estates Commissioners have exercised the vast discretion entrusted to them, particularly at a time when it is suggested that further discretion of a sweeping character, and without appeal, should be given to them. It is impossible not to disappoint people. I have no doubt that the 2,000 or 2,500 applicants whose claims do not stand investigation and who have to be sent empty away will be full of sorrow and grief, but in this world you cannot please everybody. The art of saying "no" is one of the things a Minister must learn, and the sooner "no" is said in this case the better, because it will prevent these men continuing to entertain hopes which are only doomed to disappointment. I have no desire to cause embarrassment to the Government, but I hope the Government will indicate willingness to furnish in some form the information upon which those interested can base their judgment.

THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN: My Lords, into the general question, however interesting and fascinating, I do not propose to enter. In fact, I do not see how anyone can very well do so without transgressing the rule against commenting on a Bill which is before the other House. But I wish to guard against the possible misapprehension that might arise as to my own views upon one point.

My noble friend Lord Donoughmore quoted a recommendation of the Land Conference to the effect that any measure for the settlement of the land question should be accompanied by a settlement of the evicted tenant question on an equitable basis; and my noble friend argued from that that the reinstatement of evicted tenants should proceed *pari passu* with the sale of the estates. With that in a general way I do not cavil; but I do not wish it for a moment to be imagined that I assume that the evicted tenants, or a certain number of them, who ought to be restored to their holdings or given other holdings, are not to be so restored until the last estate in Ireland has been sold. That would be quite apart from my idea. On the contrary, I think this question of evicted tenants is an urgent phase of the agrarian question in Ireland, and I do not wish it to be assumed that in my opinion the restoration of evicted tenants should be delayed until the whole transfer of land in Ireland is concluded. Nor am I sure that I am quite in agreement with my noble friend as to one part of the bargain of the Land Conference being that restorations should only occur on estates as they were sold. That is not quite my impression. I agree with him, however, that the reinstatement of an evicted tenant should be solely for the purpose of his purchasing, but I do not go so far as my noble friend in holding the opinion that he should only be restored on the sale of the estate.

As to the Motion on the Paper, I must admit that I sympathise a good deal with the noble Lord who represents the Irish Office, for I honestly do not think that any one of your Lordships could have gathered from this Motion that my noble friend was going to call attention to the special Report of the Estates Commissioners. With regard to the Motion itself, I am not very much surprised at the Government's demurring to give these Returns. I should like to ask my noble friend this: Supposing he gets them, what will he do with them? My noble and learned friend who has just sat down mentioned other points on which he thought information was desirable, but the most important information is that asked for in the Motion itself. But what are your Lordships to do when you get the names and addresses of the 2,000 tenants whom His Majesty's Government propose to restore, and the various other particulars concerning them? Are we going to sit in judgment on the list and comment upon the decisions of the Estates Commissioners and say whether those tenants should be reinstated or not? If that is to be the object surely we ought to know the particulars of all the claimants, otherwise how is it possible to judge properly?

What I think my noble and learned friend really requires is to know what *data* the Estates Commissioners took into consideration in settling whether a tenant should be restored or not, and I am bound to say I think further information on that point might be very useful to the House. As to the publication of the names and addresses and the other particulars of these 2,000 people, I confess that I think it would lead to a great deal of confusion and heartburning in Ireland, and I cannot see what practical purpose would be achieved by the publication of that Return. Therefore, I support His Majesty's Government in not agreeing to the Motion of my noble friend.

*THE EARL OF MAYO: Notwithstanding what the noble Earl who has just sat down, and who was chairman of the Land Conference, has said, I shall, as one of the members of that Conference, adhere to the statement of my noble friend Lord Donoughmore as to one part of the bargain being that any prospect for the solution of the Irish land question should be accompanied by a settlement of the evicted tenants question on equitable principles; and when the Evicted Tenants Bill reaches this House I hope care will be taken that it is dealt with on an equitable basis, and on the terms referred to the other day by the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack. We have asked for a Return of the 2,000 evicted tenants, and the noble Lord who represents the Irish Office said that if this Return were granted they would have to go into all the claims of all the others and so again into the whole question. I should like to ask, have the Government settled who these 2,000 tenants are, or have they not? The murder will out some day. The Government seem to be in a funk lest the other 6,000 tenants fall upon them and say, "Pat Murphy is being restored; why should not another Pat be restored as well?" During the debate in 1903, Mr. John Dillon said the evicted tenants in Ireland were only about 400, and Mr. Redmond stated that £100,000 would settle the whole thing. That was very different from this scheme. This scheme will cost a million——

*THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Earl of CREWE): May I ask whether the noble Lord is not going beyond this Motion and discussing the Evicted Tenants Bill?

*THE EARL OF MAYO: The Government propose to reinstate 2,000 tenants, and I was dealing with that matter.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: The noble Earl is only entitled to deal with the question raised by the noble Lord on the Front Bench.

*THE EARL OF MAYO: I will, then, deal with another matter. The noble Lord who replied on behalf of the Government labelled one Commissioner a landlords' man and another a tenants' man, and said that the third was an official from India. I have had dealings with these Estates Commissioners and can testify to the fact that they have acted all through those dealings in a straightforward manner. I think it is curious that the labelling of these Commissioners should come from the other side of the House. We have every confidence in the Commissioners. The reason the evicted tenants have had to be dealt with on this enormous scale is that the Government, through the Lord-Lieutenant, have altered the rules made in dealing with this question, and the efforts of the Commissioners have been diverted from land purchase to dealing with these evicted tenants. We have asked for this Return because we have a strong suspicion that a great many of these cases have been manufactured, and manufactured in consequence of the orders given by the Lord-Lieutenant. Lord Denman quoted from a speech by Mr. Wyndham in the House of Commons in 1903, in which he spoke of giving the evicted tenants another chance. I contend that it was giving them another chance under the bargain of 1903. But that is quite a different thing from dealing with evicted tenants in the present manner. Therefore I do not think the noble Lord had any right to quote the words of Mr. Wyndham in connection with the new state of things which has come about in consequence of the alteration of the rules of the Estates Commissioners.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: My Lords, I hope the noble Earl who has just sat down did not in any way resent my interrupting him, but, as a matter of fact, this debate has wandered over a somewhat large field, and even the noble Earl who initiated it, in spite of the self-denying ordinance with which he began, travelled at some length in his speech—his very interesting speech—over the greater part of this whole question of evicted tenants.

I should like to say one word about what has been called the bargain made between the landed interest in Ireland and those who spoke for the tenants before the Land Act of 1903. I was very grateful to the noble Earl, Lord Dunraven, for correcting what I can only venture to call, so far as one point was concerned, a travesty of that bargain as it has been understood by everybody, as I believe, from that day to this. I have never heard anyone before intimate, as I understood the Earl of Donoughmore to intimate, that this particular question of the evicted tenants was no more urgent than the general question of land purchase in Ireland, and that it might easily be possible that fourteen or fifteen years might pass before some of these evicted tenants were restored to their holdings. I cannot read this into anything that was said by the Government of the day, and I should be very much surprised if the noble Earl, or anybody else, could show me any passage in the speeches of the Irish Members of Parliament which showed that they put this colour on the statements which were made by Mr. Wyndham at that time. I think it is really beyond dispute that, although the whole question of land purchase was an urgent one in the sense that it was desirable to deal with it in as few years as possible, this question of the evicted tenants was considered infinitely more urgent, and that it certainly was the general expectation that it would be dealt with in a fewer number of years than the land question as a whole.

With regard to the large and ever-increasing number of people who claim to be evicted tenants, I think it is important to draw a distinction between an evicted tenant and a tenant who has been evicted. Evicted tenant has become—I am sorry it should be so—almost a technical term; and what I think is clearly understood by evicted tenants when they are spoken of as a class in Ireland are those who have lost their holdings owing to the agrarian disputes which have existed in that country, and that, therefore, when there was a desire that there should be a general eirenicon at the time of the Land Bill—as Mr. Wyndham said, that bygones should be bygones—these men were to be treated on precisely the same terms as those who were tenants of farms. But no one ever imagined that, when evicted tenants were thus spoken of, every man who had lost his farm, whether it was because he was an impossible tenant, or a bad farmer, or a generally undesirable person, should necessarily be reinstated. You have only to study the debates on this subject to see that, when the Irish Members of Parliament spoke of evicted tenants, it was to those who had suffered in the land war that they confined their remarks.

I am very glad to note that noble Lords opposite speak of the Commissioners in high terms. I have the advantage of knowing much of these three gentlemen, and I can entirely confirm everything that has been said in praise of their high character, of their ability, and of the devotion which they give to their work. The noble Lord opposite has said that this demand for a

Return of the tenants whom His Majesty's Government intend to restore did not show any mistrust of the Commissioners. I join with Lord Dunraven in asking what is the object of having this Return, unless you mistrust the Commissioners? Our contention is that it is perfectly safe to leave to them the selection as between those who are genuine evicted tenants in the sense intended by the Act of 1903, and those who are not. If noble Lords ask for a Return of names, it can only be to look into the individual cases and, in some way, to revise the discretion exercised by the Commissioners. That shows you have not confidence in the Commissioners, and that you desire to constitute yourselves or somebody else into a Court of Appeal from the Commissioners.

It seems to me that the real question is, What do you mean by a *genuine* evicted tenant? I use the words in the sense I have just indicated, as that of a man who had been evicted owing to agrarian conditions in Ireland. But if by "genuine" you mean to go behind those conditions and to ask, in individual cases, whether a man is a generally deserving person, whether through all the changes and chances of life he has behaved exactly as he ought to have behaved, then you are in conflict with the declaration of Mr. Wyndham when he particularly said that you ought not to go into those matters, and that, so far as those matters were concerned, he would desire to allow bygones to be bygones. It seems to me impossible to supply a sort of biography—a kind of "Who's who?"—of all those evicted tenants, and I entirely agree with my noble friend Lord Dunraven that, even if this list were produced at great trouble and expense, your Lordships would really not know what to do with it.

The noble and learned Lord opposite asked for some account of the principles on which the Commissioners had acted in the past. As to that, my right hon. friend the Chief Secretary said in the House of Commons that, so far as regards the evicted tenants or their representatives who have already been reinstated or provided with new homes, there was no objection to giving a Return of the particulars asked for. I stand, of course, by the declaration of my right hon. friend as far as the past is concerned, but, as regards the future, I, for the reasons which my noble friend has stated so clearly, am not able to give the Return.

The noble Earl Lord Donoughmore spoke of the dispossession of those who have taken evicted farms. It seems to me that the hon. Gentlemen who sit for Ireland spoke very fairly indeed on that subject in the course of the debates. I think both Mr. Redmond and Mr. O'Brien dealt with it, and that they held the view, which His Majesty's Government also hold, that where it is shown that a man is a *bona fide* farmer, working his farm to advantage and desiring to retain it, he certainly ought not to be dispossessed. But there were a certain number of cases where men were put into farms who were not *bona fide* farmers, to whom it was of no advantage to remain, and those cases stand on a different footing. I hope noble Lords opposite will be content with the interesting discussion that has taken place and will not press us for Papers beyond the extent to which my right hon. friend has indicated his willingness to go.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My Lords, I rise with more than my usual feeling of trepidation because I feel sure that before I have proceeded very far with my remarks I shall be called to order by the Lord President, who so effectually checked the eloquence of my noble friend behind me. Lord Mayo is not, as a rule, very easily repressed, and I was somewhat surprised at the readiness with which, at a moment when he was making observations which seemed to me perfectly relevant to the Motion before the House, he was interrupted by the noble Earl.

I am not going to enter on a discussion of the famous so-called bargain of 1903. I would only say this of it, that there were two elements in it, the presence of which will not be contested. It was, in the first place, to be on a voluntary basis, and, in the next place, on what is spoken of as an equitable basis. A passage from a speech delivered by Mr. Wyndham has been quoted by the other side; but surely I may venture to quote, from a passage which really governs the whole of the policy of which

Mr. Wyndham was then the exponent, these words—

> "He had laid down three principles for dealing with this question. The first was that there should be no compulsion, the second, that they must give equal treatment to all classes of persons with whom the Act would deal, and the third, that there must be no special mention of evicted tenants."

That is a clear and succinct description of Mr. Wyndham's policy. At any rate, whether the scope of this supposed bargain was wider or narrower than we imagined, no one ever supposed that it was to lead to the kind of proposals which have now been placed before Parliament by His Majesty's Government.

I think my noble friend is fully entitled to bring up this question. He does not desire at this moment to call in question the Government Bill, but he does rightly desire to call attention to the *data* on which this proposal or any other proposals for dealing with the evicted tenants must be based. What is the position of this House? Is it not extremely important that the ground should be cleared for us by the production of some evidence at any rate as to the lines on which the Government intend to proceed? We shall have this Bill, a Bill of the most controversial description, embodying principles which no one has yet accepted (and least of all His Majesty's Government), in the last days, or even in the last hours, of the session; and it will be discussed under great pressure of time. It will certainly be discussed, too, under pressure, I will not say of threats, but I will say of suggestions that it is of urgent importance for the sake of peace and good order in Ireland that the Bill should be passed into law without further delay. Is it not natural that we should desire now to elicit information as to the very foundations on which the Government measure is supposed to rest?

With regard to our attitude on this side of the House, I may say that we are entirely ready to approach this question in no narrow or grudging spirit. We admit that, if there is to be a great settlement of the Irish land question on lines of purchase, that settlement may well include a measure for the reinstatement, under careful restrictions, of a number of those who have lost their farms owing to agrarian disputes during the last few years. But we certainly assume that, if a settlement of this kind is to take place in regard to the evicted tenants, it should be upon the distinct assumption that the other part of the bargain of 1903, that part which dealt with the sale and purchase of land, should be carried out loyally and in the spirit which characterised the negotiations which then took place. I have, however, yet to learn that any one on this side of the House, or on that, is in favour of an indiscriminate restoration of the whole of the evicted tenants who have lost their farms during the last twenty-five years. His Majesty's Government are evidently themselves not in favour of such a restoration, for they are selecting somewhere about 2,000 cases out of a grand total which is variously estimated at 6,000 or 8,000.

Are we too curious when we ask his Majesty's Government to give us some idea of the criterion which has been applied? Where have they drawn the frontier line between those who are to be admitted to these immense and unusual advantages and those to whom they are to be denied? Whom have they consulted? We know that agents of the Land Commission have been travelling about the country collecting information. Have they consulted any representatives of the owners of the estates from which these people were evicted? The noble Lord spoke of the confidence which was due to the Estates Commissioners; but he surely does not ask us to believe that every one of these 8,000 cases was personally examined into by the three Commissioners themselves. It is obvious that they depended to a great extent on local information.

I assume, as the noble Earl allows me to assume, that it is not intended that every broken down farmer who has lost his farm during the last twenty-five years is to be put back. If that were contemplated, it would involve as a consequence that the same privilege should be extended to unfortunate farmers in other parts of the United Kingdom as well as in Ireland, and no one proposes that. Nor, again, is the Government's proposal confined to those who are only spoken of as "Plan of Campaign tenants." We know that they have been virtually provided for already. Out of a total of 1,600, there are only about 160 unprovided for, and they belong to two estates only.

There must be a criterion of some kind which has been applied by the Estates Commissioners, and we want to get at what that test was. My noble friend proposes that the names of the selected tenants should be published. His Majesty's Government see a difficulty in that course. I can quite understand one difficulty which, no doubt, weighs very considerably with them, and that is the feeling of exasperation which will be produced when 4,000 find themselves left out, and only 2,000 find themselves left in. That will be a rude awakening which may be deferred, but which has to come; and I do not think the Government of Ireland will have a very happy quarter of an hour when two-thirds of the flock become aware that they are on the side of the goats and not on the side of the sheep. If we cannot have the names—and I admit that in some respects the information provided by the mere production of the names would not be of a very convincing or satisfactory character—can His Majesty's Government not give us the information which my noble friend seeks in some other shape such as that suggested by my noble and learned friend Lord Ashbourne? It cannot be difficult. We have been told during the last three days by a member of the Government that they now know the exact number of those who have a just claim to reinstatement. Let us be told how that exact number has been arrived at.

I hope noble Lords opposite will not think that the feeling of suspicion—for I can use no other word—with which we regard these proposals is altogether unreasonable. Look at the portentous, the immense growth which this evicted tenants problem has undergone within the last year or two. In 1894 Mr. John Morley announced that a sum of £100,000—afterwards raised to £250,000—would settle the whole question. In 1899 Mr. Michael Davitt estimated the whole number of tenants to be dealt with at a 1,000. In 1903 Mr. John Dillon said that, in his opinion, a sum of £200,000 would be sufficient to settle the question and to settle it in a generous way. What has happened since? How do His Majesty's Government account for the extraordinary increase in the number of those who are now applying for and of those who are now going to obtain this great privilege of reinstatement? We are alarmed at the manner in which the lesson which has been taught them has been learnt by the tenant farmers of Ireland. We are not less alarmed because we fear that the great sum which will be required to carry out this measure—a sum estimated at £2,000,000, to which must be added the expense (which cannot fail to be very great) of equipping the holdings which these tenants are to occupy and the expense of supplying them with capital with which to begin their enterprise—is likely to be diverted from funds which would be more properly employed in carrying out the great operation of land purchase in Ireland. We doubt very much whether you will get these two or three millions as an extra allowance from the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and if you do not, so surely will that sum be diverted from funds whose legitimate destination is the promotion of land purchase. That is why we have raised this question. Our feeling is that, unless you restrict this privilege carefully, and exclude from this boon all those tenants whose cases are not really deserving, you will put an immense premium upon the repudiation of contracts in Ireland, and that you will start all over the country a new wave of insecurity, owing to the compulsory shuffling of tenancies to which you will be obliged to resort if you are going to make room for anything like the contemplated proportion of these numerous applicants.

The seriousness of this matter cannot be overrated. And remember, the victims of this attempt will be, on the one hand, the sitting tenants, whom, unless I misunderstand the proposal, you are going to remove from their farms in order to make room for other and less deserving people whom you are to bring from a distance—on the one hand the sitting tenants, men who have fulfilled their obligations honourably and against whom not a word is to be said; and, on the other hand, landlords who, perhaps, have never had any difficulty on their estates, with whom everything has gone quietly and happily, and who yet may be called upon to give up land which is as much theirs as the clothes upon their backs, and to dispossess tenants who have as much right to remain where they are as any tenants in any part of the United Kingdom. And all this is in order to facilitate this dangerous enterprise. I am afraid that unless it is carried out under the most careful restriction you will by this operation saddle the Land Commissioners —who will in future become the landlords of the greater part of Ireland—with a class of tenants who will owe their position, not to the fact that they are the survival of the fittest, but to the fact that they have successfully repudiated their obligations and extorted by participation in a dangerous agitation a privilege which honest and law-abiding farmers will never be allowed to obtain.

*THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE: My Lords, after the speeches of my noble friends behind me I do not intend to press my Motion to a division; but I certainly hope we shall see the Return which has already been promised in another place. I shall, of course, consult with my noble friends as to whether we cannot move for a Return containing the *data* which have been asked for.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

LIMITED PARTNERSHIPS BILL.

House in Committee (according to Order.)

[The Earl of ONSLOW in the Chair.]

Clauses 1 to 3 agreed to.

Clause 4:—

THE EARL OF GRANARD said the object of the Amendment standing in his name to this Clause was to bring the Bill on all fours with the Companies Act, in which it was enacted that a partnership carrying on the business of banking could not consist of more than ten persons, and in the case of general concerns of not more than twenty persons.

Amendment moved—

"In page 1, line 22, after the word 'partnership,' to insert the words 'shall not consist, in the case of a partnership carrying on the business of banking, of more than ten persons, and, in the case of any other partnership, of more than twenty persons.'"—(*The Earl of Granard.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Drafting Amendment agreed to.

The Marquess of Lansdowne.

LORD AVEBURY moved to amend sub-section (2)—

"A limited partnership must contain one or more persons called general partners, who shall be liable for all debts and obligations incurred in the usual course of the partnership business by or on behalf of the firm, etc.,"

by omitting the words "incurred in the usual course of the partnership business by or on behalf." It was thought that the words as they stood might sometimes raise unnecessary and difficult questions.

Amendment moved—

"In page 1, lines 24 and 25, to leave out the words 'incurred in the usual course of the partnership business by or on behalf.'"—(*Lord Avebury.*)

THE EARL OF GRANARD accepted the Amendment.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

LORD AVEBURY moved to amend the latter half of the same sub-section, which provided that the one or more persons to be called limited partners—

"shall at the time of entering into such partnership contribute, or undertake to contribute, thereto a sum or sums as capital or property valued at a stated amount, and shall not be liable for the debts or obligations of the firm beyond the amount so contributed or to be contributed,"

by omitting the words "or undertake to contribute." He said that these words were not to be found in any of the foreign codes, and they were objected to by many good judges.

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 1, to leave out the words 'or undertake to contribute.'"—(*Lord Avebury.*)

THE EARL OF GRANARD said the Board of Trade did not oppose the Amendment if the noble Lord desired to press it. He pointed out, however, that uncalled liability had been a source of strength in this country in banking and limited liability concerns.

LORD AVEBURY agreed, but said it would facilitate the passing of the Bill if the words were omitted.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

THE EARL OF GRANARD had an Amendment to Sub-section (3), which ran—

"(3) A limited partner shall not during the continuance of the partnership draw out or receive back any part of his contribution, and if he does so draw out or receive back any such part shall be liable for the debts and obligations of the firm as if he had agreed to contribute the amount so drawn out or received back, in addition to the sum (if any) which he is liable to contribute independently of this provision."

He moved to insert, after the word "partnership," the words "either directly or indirectly," the object being to prevent a limited partner receiving back by way of loan any of the money he had invested in a limited partnership.

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 6, after the word 'partnership,' to insert the words 'either directly or indirectly.'"—(*The Earl of Granard.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

THE EARL OF GRANARD moved the insertion of a new sub-section to enable a body corporate to become a limited partner.

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 13, after the word 'name,' to insert as a new sub-section: '(5) A body corporate may be a limited partner.'"—(*The Earl of Granard.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 4, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 5 agreed to.

Clause 6:—

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said the object of his Amendment to Clause 6 was to give to a limited partner power to have an audit of the accounts, which was obviously a matter of very great interest and importance to him.

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 21, after the word 'thereon,' to insert the words 'and he may also require that the said books shall be audited by a person who publicly carries on business as an accountant.'"—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

THE EARL OF GRANARD said the Board of Trade were very much opposed to the insertion of these words, as a limited partner was already fully safeguarded. He could inspect the books of the company with an agent, and there was nothing to prevent the agent being an accountant. Moreover, a limited partner could make any arrangement he liked before investing his money. If the Amendment were accepted, the result would be that the expense of the audit would fall on the partnership.

LORD JOICEY supported the Amendment. He thought it desirable that the limited partner should have the power of insisting that the books should be audited by a public accountant. The cost of the audit was not a serious matter, and he hoped the Board of Trade would withdraw their opposition.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord LOREBURN) said that already a limited partner could, by himself or his agent, from time to time inspect the books of the firm. If he liked to employ a public accountant for the purpose the clause as it stood enabled him to do so. Anyone who was at liberty by his agent to examine the books could get an audit made, and the only question was whether he should pay for it himself or be able to impose it on the partnership. He thought the limited partner should pay for it himself.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

THE EARL OF GRANARD moved to delete Clause 6, and to insert a new clause which had been suggested by Lord Lindley.

Amendment moved—

"To leave out Clause 6, and to insert the following new clause:—6.—(1) A limited partner shall not take part in the management of the partnership business, and shall not have power to bind the firm; provided that a limited partner may by himself or his agent at any time inspect the books of the firm and examine into the state and prospects of the partnership business, and may advise with the partners thereon. If a limited partner takes part in the management of the partnership business he shall be liable for all debts and obligations of the firm incurred while he so takes part in the management as though he were a general partner. (2) A limited partner shall not be entitled to dissolve the partnership by notice. (3) A limited partnership shall not be dissolved by the death or bankruptcy of a limited partner, and the lunacy of a limited partner shall not be a ground for dissolution of the partnership by the Court unless the lunatic's share cannot be otherwise ascertained and realised. (4) In the event of the dissolution of a limited partnership its affairs shall be wound up by the general partners unless the Court otherwise orders. (5) Subject to any agreement expressed or implied between the partners—(*a*) Any difference arising as to ordinary matters connected with the partnership business may be decided by a majority of the general partners. (*b*) A limited partner may, with the consent of the general partners, assign his share in the partnership, and upon such an assignment the assignee shall become a limited partner with all the rights of the assignor. (*c*) The other partners shall not be entitled to dissolve the partnership by reason of any limited partner suffering his share to be charged for his separate debt. (*d*) A person may be introduced as a partner without the consent of the existing limited partners. (*e*) Applications to the Court to wind up a limited partnership shall be by petition under the Companies Acts, 1862 to 1900."—(*The Earl of Granard.*)

LORD AVEBURY expressed his indebtedness to Lord Lindley. The new clause was an improvement.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 7 agreed to.

Clause 8 :—

Drafting and verbal Amendments agreed to.

Clause 8, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 9 :—

Drafting Amendments agreed to.

Clause 9, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 10 :—

Drafting Amendments agreed to.

Clause 10, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 11 :—

Verbal Amendment agreed to.

Clause 11, as amended, agreed to.

Remaining clauses agreed to.

Standing Committee negatived. The Report of Amendments to be received on Tuesday next; and Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 105.)

ALL SAINTS' SCHOOL, HALIFAX.

*LORD BARNARD: My Lords, I rise to call attention to the action of the Board of Education with regard to All Saints' School, Salterhebble, Halifax; and to move for Papers. In doing so it is necessary that I should refer to the facts relating to the case. For some sixty years past a national school has existed at this place. Naturally in the course of that time the building had become old and out of date, and in the month of February, 1904, the managers recognised this and instructed their architect to prepare plans for a new building and at the same time to ascertain whether the municipal authorities wanted any of the site for road widening; and in April of that year they informed the Board of their decision. On 28th May in the same year—that is, three months after their decision—they received from the Board of Education a copy of the inspector's report on the premises, which naturally was not very flattering. The Board intimated that the grant to the school could not be continued after 31st March, 1906—

> "Unless by that date satisfactory progress has been made towards providing suitable accommodation to replace it."

Not that the new building should have been erected, but that satisfactory progress should have been made towards providing fresh accommodation.

Plans were shortly afterwards sent in to the corporation. Various delays occurred, for which the managers disclaim all responsibility; and in the course of the negotiations the corporation changed its attitude two or three times. No less than three sets of plans had to be prepared and approved, the corporation admitting that they were to a great extent wrong in the matter by paying the managers £30 for one set of plans. At last, in November, 1905, the plans were approved by the corporation. They were forwarded to the Board of Education and had to be sent back again for some slight alteration; but eventually, on 26th March, 1906, the Board of Education returned them. They were, I believe, not actually received by the local education authority till a little later, but that authority finally approved them on 2nd May. You will mark that the Board of Education in March, and the local education authority in May, finally approved the plans, and to all intents and purposes the matter was absolutely settled.

The House will remember that in the interval the Education Bill had been introduced, and it could hardly be expected that the managers would proceed, with that Bill hanging over their heads, to spend a considerable sum of money on a new school the fate of which they could not at that time foresee, and consequently they suspended their operations. This view of the matter was fully understood both by the Board of Education and the local authority, for during the interval neither of those bodies moved a step in the matter. In the month of December, 1906, as your Lordships well know, the Education Bill was withdrawn by the Government. In the following month the proceedings began again. The local education authority wrote to ask the Board of Education—I suppose their tempers had not been rendered extra pleasant by the fate of the Bill—for authority to discontinue the maintenance of this school.

At that date, however, the Board of Education took a very fair and proper view of the position. They wrote first of all to the managers and said that the local education authority had approached them and had pointed out that nothing had been done. The Board asked the managers what they were doing. Thereupon the managers explained to the Board of Education the reasons why they had suspended operations, and stated that they had actually arranged to proceed at once with the erection of the school, which, as a matter of fact, they did the same week. This answer—and this is the most important point in the whole of the proceedings—was evidently satisfactory to the Board of Education, for the Board wrote to the local education authority forwarding a copy of the managers' letter and stating—

> "The Board of Education hope that this assurance of the managers will enable the authority to reconsider their decision to discontinue the maintenance of the school."

That was an absolutely fair letter, but it did not at all meet the wishes of the local education authority, who, from all that I have been able to ascertain, were thirsting for the blood of this wretched little Church school.

What happened next no man knows. And that is my reason for trying to obtain further information from the Government. At any rate, the local education authority immediately after that pressed the Board and urged that no buildings had actually been begun. They also said that another year must elapse, and, although the architect and the managers had explained very fully that they could have half the school ready and in occupation by the end of the summer, they brought all the pressure they possibly could to bear on the Board of Education. The next step which the Board of Education took was to give two days notice that they would send down an inspector. That inspector visited the school, but the principal manager, who had had to do with the business, had other matters to attend to and could not be present. In due course the inspector sent in his report to the Board of Education, and the result was that on 1st May last, in spite of their previous letter, they wrote that in consideration of all the facts they were not prepared to oppose the local education authority in their desire to close the school.

It is obvious that some pressure was brought to bear on the Board of Education to induce them to change their mind. I would remind your Lordships of the parallel case referred to the other day by my noble friend Lord Dartmouth. The present position is this. The local people—as the local Press would show—are naturally very sore about this. Their school, as a matter of fact, is closed, and they consider that they have been very badly treated. They think that either some secret and unfair influence has been brought to bear on the Board of Education in London, or that the Board must have some information which has induced them to change their mind which has not been communicated to the public.

There are two reasons which may be asserted for the action of the Board. One is the delay, but I think I have explained sufficiently the cause of the delay and shown that the Board of Education were satisfied that the delay was not an insuperable objection so late as February last. The other reason may be the assertion of the local education authority that the buildings were unhealthy and unsafe. The managers admit that the buildings were not up to modern requirements, but they have the authority of their own architect, who has known the buildings for years, for stating that they are neither unhealthy nor unsafe. Sufficient repairs have been done to make them adequate for all temporary purposes, and for the few months which would elapse before the new building would be ready for occupation. The parents of nearly all the children in the school have memorialised the Board of Education to preserve the school to them. They say they have no opportunity of getting such Church of England religious instruction as they desire within reasonable distance if the school is closed. Here the people wish to have certain religious instruction, and are told by a Government Department that they cannot have it. I think in this matter the will of the people, of which we have heard so much lately, should be supreme. We were told yesterday in the discussion on the Army Bill, when the question of giving military drill to children under sixteen years of age was being considered, that the opinion of certain Members of the House of Commons must be regarded because it expressed the wishes of the parents themselves. Well, why should not the wishes of the parents be considered when they express a determined wish to have Church of England instruction?

Another point I should like to press very urgently on the attention of the House is that this case absolutely differs from the typical case which politicians frequently declaim, in which it is said that the clergy and the Bishops are at the back of it all. From the beginning to the end of this matter the Bishop has never been mentioned, and by a curious coincidence the vicarage became vacant during the course of the proceedings. The late vicar was not mentioned at all, and beyond the fact that the new vicar presided at a recent meeting no clergyman has taken any part in these proceedings at all. I would like also to draw your Lordships' attention to the extreme energy of some of the managers and others interested. This is not a "one man show." A working man took the trouble to come up to London from Halifax to see the Minister for Education in order to try and induce him to change his views. This is a case in which working men and women have determined to do their utmost to try and retain such religious teaching for their children as they desire, and which, so far as I can ascertain, they are being entirely denied.

The information which, I venture to submit, the Board of Education ought to place before the public in this matter is such official documents as contain the evidence which induced them to change the views they so clearly expressed in February to the views they expressed in their later letter of May, in which they declined to press the local education authority to continue the maintenance of this school. The principal evidence in the matter would be the instructions given to the inspector and the report of the inspector. I know that it is not always convenient to give the whole of the report of an inspector, but in a question of such vital importance as this so much of the report could be given as would justify the action of the Board of Education. The Board of Education is one of the greatest Government Departments, and unless that and all other Government Departments can maintain the confidence of the people of this country I fear that the administrative duties of Government will become very much more difficult for both Parties in the State in the future than they have been in the past.

I trust that His Majesty's Government will see fit to grant my Motion, and so not only meet me but other Members of this House who wish to be satisfied that no unfair or undue influence has been brought to bear in effecting the crushing out of this small Church school. I for one shall feel perfectly willing to acquiesce in any evidence that may be given across the floor of the House which can satisfy me on that point. Failing that I fear that the people of this district, as well as the Members of your Lordships' House and the public at large, will have to come to the conclusion that the decision of the Board of Education was dictated, not by the interests of the children, but by political expedience; not by the welfare of the public, but by sectarian malice and Party spite. I beg to move.

Moved, That there be laid before the House papers relating to the Salterhebble, Halifax, All Saints School.—(*Lord Barnard.*)

*THE EARL OF CREWE: My Lords, I am anxious not to trouble the House with any repetition of the circumstances stated by the noble Lord. He informed the House that in the spring of the year 1904 the managers recognised that the school was in a somewhat dilapidated and ancient condition and proposed to rebuild it. But he did not state that what induced them to do so was a letter from the Board of Education in September, 1903, declining to recognise the school except temporarily. Then negotiations proceeded, as the noble Lord has described, and the most important point was that in May, 1904, the Board received a further report on the premises from the inspector, and then informed the managers that no grant could be made to the school after 31st May, 1906, unless by that date satisfactory progress had been made in the provision of proper accommodation to replace the old. Surely that was adequate notice. The extension to 1906, under the circumstances, was exceedingly liberal, as I think must generally be admitted.

Then the plans were sent in in January, 1906, and were approved by the Board of Education at the end of March. The local education authority then wrote to the Board of Education and said that nearly three years had passed since the original notice was given to the managers, and they did not see any sign of a new school being erected. Three years is a considerable time, when all is said and done, and in considering this case it is important to bear the fact in mind when either the local education authority or the Board of Education are accused of having exhibited partiality in this matter. They went on to say that the premises were quite unsuitable for teaching purposes, and there were grave doubts about the safety of the roof. They proposed, therefore, to discontinue maintenance. The Board of Education on that desired to put it to the local education authority whether, having shown considerable patience, they might not show a little more, and the local education authority replied that they could not see any reason for departing from the course suggested in their letter.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: What date has the noble Earl got to?

*THE EARL OF CREWE: 15th February of this year. They proposed, therefore, to notify the managers at the expiration of three months that they would no longer be responsible for the maintenance of the school. Then the Board of Education, anxious still to act as peacemakers, entered into communication with the managers, who agreed to advertise at once for tenders. The Board informed the local authority to that effect, adding that if any unnecessary delay took place in carrying out the work the Board would be prepared to support the action of the local authority. The local authority replied that the school was unsafe, and that already three years had passed, and it would be another year before this insecure school could be replaced by another building. They added that for all the children attending this school there was ample room in a school within a few minutes' walk where there were all the advantages of modern equipment. Taking all these points into consideration the local education authority decided that, in the interests of the children, it was their duty to refuse further responsibility for the maintenance of this school. The Board of Education finally replied that they saw no reason for interfering with the decision of the local authority.

I do not think it is disputed that the buildings are entirely unsatisfactory. That will be admitted by all who have knowledge of the circumstances. The noble Lord said that it was not to be expected that the managers could proceed with their building while the Education Bill was in a hopeful, though precarious, condition. That, under certain circumstances, might be a good and sound argument, but it really is not relevant to the question the Board of Education had to consider, which was whether they were prepared to take the responsibility of saying that for one year more this school should continue; and upon that, of course, the question of the condition of the school is the material fact. On that there were, as I am afraid very often happens in such cases, directly contrary statements of fact, and the Board sent an inspector to inquire what the condition of affairs really was. He visited the school in December, 1906, and his further Report stated that plaster was falling from the walls in a dangerous way, and he also stated that in his opinion the roof was insecure. Therefore, my Lords, you will see that the answer to the noble

Lord's Question really is not whether the managers did or did not do all in their power to build a new school in time—that is a separate point, on which the noble Lord may have one opinion and other people may have another—but could the Board of Education take the responsibility of over-ruling the local authority when the local authority said that the condition of the school was not such as to make it safe that it should be continued as a school for another year, and when the Board's inspector confirmed that opinion? The noble Lord seemed to consider it a matter of complaint that the inspector went down at two days' notice.

*LORD BARNARD: I did not complain, I only tried to point out that it placed the managers in some difficulty.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: When the question was as to the stability of a building the point as to whether the inspector went at two days' notice or a week's notice could not very much affect the fact. The question of notice might be relevant in some cases, as it was in the case brought forward by Lord Dartmouth the other day, but I cannot see, when it is a question of the stability of the roof, that notice has very much to do with it one way or the other. Then the noble Lord said that the parents desired the school to continue. I do not dispute that fact. I do not suppose that ever a school is closed or discontinued but that you will find some parents who would desire it to remain open.

The noble Lord really invited me, I think, to reopen the whole of the question as to how far the wishes of the parents ought to be considered in the question either of the provision or the continuance of schools. The opinions of the Government are very well known on that point. You have to set the wishes of the parents, even by the present law, against the question of the rates, and upon that, where a new school is concerned, the President of the Board of Education has to form an unassisted opinion. I do not know that I have anything further to add except to say this, that my right hon. friend is certainly not prepared in a matter of this kind, which lies within his discretion to decide upon the facts of the case as presented to him, to present the Report of the inspector with regard to the building, which is the one I presume the noble Lord means; and I think the noble Lord will have noticed that my right hon. friend has already expressed his regret in another place that he was unable to give that information.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, the noble Earl has based the very unsatisfactory answer which he has given to my noble friend mainly on the condition of the building. Now, why will the Government play with this subject? Do they really expect your Lordships and the country to believe that the whole of this question merely arose because the building was bad, and that there were no other considerations which governed the local education authority in Halifax, and made them anxious, if they possibly could, to get rid of the only Church school which was left in that town? Why does the noble Earl treat us like children, as if we were really going to accept from him the idea that it was merely on account of the badness of the building that the school was abolished? The original warning which my noble friend has related to us set forth that if something substantial were done by May, 1906, the Board of Education did not think that any case arose.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: That warning was given by the late Government in 1903.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Let me repudiate at once, in a matter of the Departmental administration, this division between one Government and another. It is not a matter to be decided as a Party question whether a school building is or is not in a fit condition. The same Department and the same officials were concerned, and the same sanitary rules bound both Governments. The first intimation was that if something substantial were done by May, 1906, the Board saw no reason why the school should be closed. As a matter of fact, as far as the Church managers were concerned they were well ahead of their time. They pushed forward the matter with great despatch, and the delay which arose was not from their fault but was due to the local town council. That council—a hostile body—delayed the plans as long as they could, and placed the managers in a position of great difficulty. But, notwithstanding these difficulties thrown in their way by their enemies, the managers were up to their time, and by the period of grace which was allowed them they had made substantial progress and had got the plans passed both by the Board of Education and the local education authority.

Then came the policy of the present Government, which, I think, involved a very natural delay on the part of the managers. They felt that they could not proceed with their work while the Bill of last year was pending before Parliament, but the moment the fate of that Bill was settled they proceeded with the work. The noble Earl says the present Government are not responsible. How can he explain the letter which was sent by the present Government in February of this year expressing the hope that the assurance which had been received from the managers would enable the local authority to reconsider their decision to discontinue their maintenance of the school? In other words, the Board of Education, having considered a communication from the managers, decided in their favour, and were of opinion that the local education authority ought to continue the school. That was in February of this year. I forget whether Mr. Birrell resigned before May. I think it is very possible he did, and passed to the other Department. It then appears that the policy of the Government had changed, and that this letter which they had written to the managers in February was to be repudiated. What my noble friend has asked is, "What passed in the interval?" What material fact arose in the interval which caused the Government to change their mind? And if no material fact took place except the change in the presidency of the Board from Mr. Birrell to Mr. McKenna, then we want to know from the Government what possible ground they had for changing the decision at which they arrived in February.

What makes this case particularly hard is that in this part of Halifax there is only this single Church school. We heard a great deal about this question last year. The local education authority at Halifax does not allow any syllabus of religious education. The religious instruction given is of the most jejune character. Very little is allowed at all, and that which is allowed must be given by the head teacher, and the head teacher alone. Anybody who has had experience of a large school knows what that means. Halifax is a town where religion in the elementary schools is treated with this marked disrespect; yet this single church school is the one selected by the present head of the Board of Education for this harsh blow. I wonder that the Government are not ashamed of themselves that they use this Departmental pressure in order to oppress the religious consciences of the people. At any rate, this discussion has been of importance because it has shown what we have to expect in our schools from the action of the present authorities at the Board of Education. The country will take note of the kind of treatment which is to be meted out, and I am quite sure they will know how to meet such oppression with the resistance which is appropriate to the occasion.

*LORD BARNARD: I very much regret that the noble Earl the Lord President has been unable to remove the very bad impression which this action on the part of the Board of Education has created amongst the working-class Church people in Halifax. My noble friend Lord Dartmouth pointed out a few days ago that there were several cases of this kind. I have also received information which has led me to the same conclusion; in fact, I personally know of one other case. Therefore, I suppose we are to take it that Church people must bow their heads to oppression of the character which these unfortunate people in Salterhebble, in Halifax, have suffered without having any reason or explanation whatever given to them of the course pursued by His Majesty's Government. I beg to withdraw the Motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

House adjourned at a quarter befor Eight o'clock, till To-morrow, half past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 10th July, 1907.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Alton Military Hospital Bill [Lords].—Read a second time and committed.

Aberdeen Corporation Electricity Bill [Lords].—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to: Ladybank Sewerage Drainage and Water Provisional Order Bill; Clyde Navigation Order Confirmation Bill, without Amendment; Leeds Corporation Bill, with Amendments.

Amendments to:—Southport Birkdale and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [Lords].—Without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill intituled, "An Act to confirm a Provisional Order under The Private Legislation Procedure Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Portobello and Musselburgh Tramways (Levenhall Extension)." [Portobello and Musselburgh Tramways (Levenhall Extension) Order Confirmation Bill [Lords.]

Killery's Divorce Bill [Lords].—That they communicate Minutes of Evidence and Proceedings taken upon the Second Reading of Killery's Divorce Bill [Lords], as desired by this House, with a request that the same may be returned.

Portobello and Musselburgh Tramways (Levenhall Extension) Order Confirmation Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; and ordered, under Section 9 of The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, to be read a second time To-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 274.]

PETITIONS.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

Petition from West Ilsley, against; to lie upon the Table.

PAUPER LUNATICS (COST OF MAINTENANCE.

Petition from Leeds, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

SMALL LANDHOLDERS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Stirling, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the Wolverhampton and Cannock Chase Railway Company to construct and work their authorised Railways as a Light Railway under The Light Railways Act, 1896, and for other purposes (Wolverhampton and Cannock Chase Railway (Light Railway) Order 1907) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and confirmed by the Board of Trade, reviving the powers granted and extending the periods limited by the Central Essex Light Railway Orders, 1901 to 1905, for the compulsory purchase of lands and extending the periods limited by those Orders for the completion of the railways and works thereby authorised (Central Essex Light Railway (Extension of Time)

Order, 1907) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and confirmed by the Board of Trade, amending the East Sussex Light Railway Orders, 1901 and 1905 (East Sussex Light Railway (Extension of Time and Amendment) Order, 1907) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES' ACCOUNTS (DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE).

Copy presented, of Report of Departmental Committee appointed to inquire into the Accounts of Local Authorities. Vol. I. Report. Vol. II. Minutes of Evidence, with Digest and Index [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATIONS.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 5th July, 1907, declaring that for the due and efficient discharge of the duties of the office of Director of the National Galleries of Scotland, professional or other peculiar qualifications not ordinarily to be acquired on the Public Service are required [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

TREATY SERIES (NO. 16, 1907).

Copy presented, of Convention between the United Kingdom and Belgium, supplementing Article XIV. of the Treaty of Extradition of 29th October, 1901. Signed at London, 5th March, 1907. Ratifications exchanged at London, 17th April, 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TREATY SERIES (NO. 17, 1907).

Copy presented, of Agreement between the United Kingdom and the Republic of Costa Rica for the Exchange of Postal Money Orders. Signed at San José de Costa Rica, 26th April, 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (MISCELLANEOUS SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Report, Miscellaneous Series, No. 662 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

COLONIAL REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented, of Colonial Report, No. 527 (Ceylon, Annual Report for 1906) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Royal University of Ireland. Copy of Account of Receipts and Expenditure of the Royal University of Ireland for the year ended 31st March, 1907, together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 247.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Annual Income of Public Charities exempted from Income-Tax.

MR. R. PEARCE (Staffordshire, Leek): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the £10,000,000 of annual income of public charities in the legal sense exempted from income or property tax for the financial years ending March, 1905 and 1906, includes hospitals and friendly societies; and, if so, whether he can state the amount of such income for those years, excluding hospitals and friendly societies.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The £10,000,000 does include the income of hospitals and friendly societies, so far as such income would, if not specially exempted, be assessable to the tax, but the amount of such income cannot be separated from the total.

Imports of Cocoa.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he can state the amount of cocoa imported into this country from St. Thomé or from the Portuguese territory of Angola, from the West Indies, and from elsewhere.

(Answered by Mr. Asquith.)

Statement showing the Quantity of Cocoa imported into the United Kingdom from the following Countries and Possessions in the year 1906, together with the Quantities consigned therefrom in the same period.

Countries whence	Imported.	Consigned.
	Lbs.	Lbs.
Portugal - - - - - -	12,964,369	5,862,164
Portuguese West Africa - - -	—	6,658,042
British West India Islands - - -	13,560,501	15,158,713
Other Countries, viz. :—		
Germany - - - -	3,702,774	1,639,647
Netherlands - - - -	1,137,748	323,045
France - - - - -	4,695,128	1,430,512
Ecuador - - - - -	2,812,457	5,901,142
Brazil - - - - -	4,179,002	4,650,414
British West Africa - - -	2,112,352	2,135,827
Ceylon and dependencies - -	4,455,901	4,468,104
Other Countries and possessions -	2,050,089	3,442,711
Total - -	51,670,321	51,670,321

Allocation of Fines in Cases under the Irish Education Act, 1892.

COLONEL McCALMONT (Antrim, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any alteration has recently been made in regard to the allocation of fines imposed in cases under The Irish Education Act, 1892; whether they are now payable to the Crown instead of the local authority; and whether he will consider the advisability of adopting the proceeding of Section 3 (5) of the Education Act of 1902.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The question involved in this matter is one of law. My right hon. friend the Attorney-General for Ireland has instituted proceedings in the High Court with the object of obtaining an authoritative decision upon the construction of the statutes regulating the application of the fines referred to. The arguments cannot take place before next sittings.

Rate Collector's Office on Licensed Premises.

COLONEL McCALMONT: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Patrick Hughes, a rate collector in Dundalk, who recently cut the halyards of and threw the British flag into the sea, has his office in a public-house; and whether this is in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Local Government Board.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Local Government Board are not aware that Mr. Patrick Hughes, rate collector, has his office in a public-house, but will make inquiries in the matter. It is contrary to law for a rate collector to have his office as such in a public-house.

Evicted Tenants—Case of John Normoyle.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say whether the Estates Commissioners have received an application from John Normoyle, of Adare, in the county of Limerick, labourer, and son of an evicted tenant, for a parcel of the untenanted land in the district when purchased by them; and, if so, whether it will receive their favourable consideration.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners have recently received John Normoyle's application, and will consider it in due course.

Evicted Tenants—Case of Mrs. Lena O'Carroll, of Tralee.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say whether the Estates Commissioners have received an application for reinstatement or an equivalent holding from Mrs. Lena O'Carroll, of Tralee, in the county of Kerry, daughter of Jeremiah Hayes, deceased, of Listowel, evicted tenant on the estate of Lord Listowel; whether Jeremiah Hayes sent in an application form; and, if so, whether it will receive their favourable consideration.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners have received Mrs. O'Carroll's application, which appears to be in similar terms to that lodged by her deceased father. The case will be dealt with by the inspector who is at present engaged on the estate of Lord Listowel.

British Indians in Rhodesia.

SIR WILLIAM BULL (Hammersmith): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been drawn to the proceedings in the Legislative Council of Rhodesia, which threaten the imposition upon the British Indians of that Colony of disabilities similar to those of the Transvaal under the Asiatic Law Amendment Act; and whether he proposes to take any action in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) During the recent session of the Legislative Council of Southern Rhodesia one of the elected members moved a resolution asking the Government of the territory to legislate so as to protect the territory from an influx of undesirable Asiatic immigrants, and a promise was given that the subject would be dealt with next session, which will not be held till about this time next year. The Secretary of State has not yet received any proposals from the Administration of Southern Rhodesia, but will inquire further into the matter.

Barristers practising in Egyptian Courts—Council of Discipline.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that the council of discipline, which tries barristers practising in the native Courts of Egypt, is at present wholly composed of judges and the Procureur-General in his quality of magistrate; and whether he will advise the Egyptian Government to secure for the Bar adequate representation upon such council.

(*Answered by Secretary Sir Edward Grey.*) The question is one of administrative detail which must be left to the Egyptian Government.

Egyptian Legal Practice—Gratuitous Defence of Prisoners.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that members of the Bar practising before the native Courts in Egypt are compelled to defend prisoners gratuitously; whether, upon failure to appear for the defence after selection by the Court, a fine of £50 may be inflicted upon them; and whether he will advise the Egyptian Government to alter the system.

(*Answered by Secretary Sir Edward Grey.*) I am not aware of the system which obtains in regard to this point; but I do not see that I can advantageously interfere in a matter of this kind which concerns the Egyptian Government.

Arrests of British Indians at Delagoa Bay.

SIR WILLIAM BULL: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been drawn to the case of twenty-five British Indians who recently were arrested in Delagoa Bay by the Portuguese authorities, on a charge of being in possession of passes not their own, and were without trial sent off to work as prisoners on the Delagoa Bay Railway; whether he will ascertain if the British Consul at Lorenzo Marques took any steps on behalf of these British subjects; and whether he is aware that dissatisfaction exists by reason of the general conduct of the British consulate in respect of British Indians both residing in and passing through Portuguese territory.

(*Answered by Secretary Sir Edward Grey.*) His Majesty's Government have no information that British Indians have recently been arrested at Delagoa Bay. A Report is being called for from His Majesty's Consul General at Lorenzo Marques in regard to the matter. With respect to the last portion of the hon. Member's Question, the answer is in the negative. I have had no reason to suppose that this is the case.

Postmastership of Limerick.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Postmaster-General whether the postmastership of Limerick, with an annual salary of £480 a year attached to it, is now vacant, or is about to become vacant; whether he is aware that the postmastership of this city has not been held by an Irishman for several years past; and whether, before selecting the best qualified candidate for the future postmastership of this place, he will give some consideration to the claims of applicants in Ireland.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The answer to each point of the 'Question is in the affirmative.

The Postmastership of Castlerea

MR. FIELD: To ask the Postmaster-General, with regard to the recent preferment of the salaried sub-postmaster of Ilkeston to the postmastership of Castlerea, whether he can state the date of the Civil Service certificate of the appointee in this instance and the salary and allowances attached to the Ilkeston office; whether Ilkeston is a Crown office; if not, what is the amount of the grant in respect of house rent.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Postmaster-General whether the lately vacant postmastership of Castlerea has recently been filled by the transfer of Mr. Cooper, lately salaried sub-postmaster of Ilkeston, Nottingham; whether he will state the annual emoluments received by Mr. Cooper at Ilkeston and the total length of his established service in the Post Office, the number of Irish Post Office officials who applied for the postmastership of Castlerea, and the annual emoluments and total length of established service of the senior recommended Irish candidate; and, seeing that all Post Office officials are paid by the public, will he explain, for their information, how he selects the best qualified candidate from amongst the applicants, who are necessarily serving in different parts of Great Britain and Ireland and under different superiors.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) Mr. Cooper has declined the appointment of postmaster at Castlerea, and it has been conferred upon an Irish candidate. The manner in which the best qualified candidates are selected for postmasterships was recently explained in detail to the Select Committee on Post Office Servants. It is rather too complicated a matter, I fear, to explain fully in answer to a Question in this House.

Post Office Savings Bank—Transfer of Irish Business to Dublin.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Postmaster-General whether, seeing that a number of Savings Bank clerks were asked by the Savings Bank authorities, either privately or officially, some time before the present Government came into office, if they would serve in Dublin in case the Irish work was transferred from London to Dublin; that the percentages of Irish deposits and withdrawals made through British deposit books, and *vice versa*, as worked out by the Savings Bank, either privately or officially, show only 1 per cent. approximately on the totals; that, apart from the inconvenience of Irish depositors, Ireland loses £30,000 per annum by having the Irish Savings Bank accounts kept in London; that 99 per cent. of the manufactured stuff used in the Post Office in Ireland is not manufactured in Ireland; that clerical work can be as efficiently and, having regard to the cost of housing accommodation, more economically performed in Dublin than in London; and that it would be more in conformity with Irish ideas if the Irish Savings Bank accounts were kept in Dublin, he will further consider the advisability of transferring the work of keeping these accounts from London to Dublin.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I am afraid I have nothing to add to the various replies which I have given to my hon. friend's previous Questions upon this subject.

Kingswood and Longton Charities Bills.

Mr. EVELYN CECIL (Aston Manor): To ask the hon. Member for the Elland Division, as representing the Charity Commissioners, whether, in regard to the two Bills dealing with the Kingswood and Longton Charities now before Parliament, he can set out the original clauses for which the second schedules of the Bills have been substituted, or if he can state where these clauses are published.

(*Answered by Mr. Trevelyan.*) The original clauses for which the second schedule of the Bill dealing with the Kingswood Charity, and the schedule of the Bill dealing with the Longton Charity, have been substituted are stated in the Fifty-fourth Report of the Charity Commissioners, pages 17 and 19.

Income-tax Exemptions.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the estimated amount of unearned income exempted from income-tax by reason of the system of abatements now in force for incomes of less than £700 per annum; and what is the total amount of income from all sources, earned or unearned, at present exempt from tax, distinguishing, if possible, between income exempted for the foregoing reason and income allowed for insurance or any other cause.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The answer to the first part of the Question is, about £20,000,000 for 1907–8. "The total amount of income from all sources, earned or unearned, at present exempt from tax" includes all the income that is exempt from tax by reason of the income of the recipient not exceeding £160 per annum. What the aggregate of such income may be the Board of Inland Revenue have no means of judging. All that they can make the subject of an estimate is the income that comes under their observation in connection with the assessment of income-tax, and this includes only a small fraction of the aggregate income of persons having not more than £160 per annum. The total amount of income that thus comes under observation, and that for one reason or another is exempted from tax, may for the current year be taken at rather more than £300,000,000, of which about £120,000,000 will be exempted under the system of abatements. The distribution of the £300,000,000 is shown in detail in Table CLXXV., on page 196 of the Forty-ninth Report of the Board of Inland Revenue.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Channel Fleet—Refit.

Mr. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, in view of the reduction of the Channel fleet to fourteen battleships, and the declared intention of the Admiralty to avoid further reductions by replacing ships undergoing an extensive refit with ships from the Home fleet, he can now state what is the minimum duration of a refit sufficiently extensive to entail replacement.

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee): The time required for the completion of the necessary refit is not the only criterion. One most important factor is the time required to make the ship fit for sea in case of emergency. It is obvious, therefore, that no hard and fast rule can be laid down.

Sheerness Bar.

Mr. MITCHELL-THOMSON: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the bar at Sheerness is to be dredged to a depth sufficient to enable the "Dreadnought" to cross at all states of the tide.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: As a result of the dredging which is in contemplation, the depth over the bar will be sufficient to enable the "Dreadnought" to enter at half tide.

Soldiers' Uniforms.

MR. RENDALL (Gloucestershire, Thornbury): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what the difference in the cost to the State would be if the the soldiers of the Army and the Reserve Forces were provided only with clothes satisfying the necessities of physical warmth and comfort without regard, as at present, to considerations of adornment, colour, and advertisement.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): It would be very difficult to make a calculation on the lines suggested in the Question and the matter would not appear to be of sufficient importance to justify the considerable labour involved. I may point out that assuming that the suggestion were adopted a very large saving would probably result owing to the paucity of recruits attracted by an unadorned uniform.

Australian Meat for the Army.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the investigations by the Army authorities into the Australian meat-packing establishments have been completed; and whether the result has tended to prove that the Australian meat is properly prepared in every way.

MR. HALDANE: The Report of the officers sent to Australia to inspect the meat-packing establishments has not yet been received.

Military Manœuvres in Scotland.

MR. A. DEWAR (Edinburgh, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the recent military manœuvres in Scotland have been completed with advantage to the Army and without damage to the land where the operations were carried on; whether he is now satisfied that there are large areas of land in Scotland peculiarly suitable for cavalry training; and whether he will consider the advisability of providing such barrack accommodation as will enable him to quarter one or more cavalry regiments in Scotland, including the Scots Greys.

MR. HALDANE: The recent manœuvres in Scotland have, I think, proved a real success and have resulted in substantial advantage to the military training of the Army, and particularly of the Cavalry and Yeomanry. I believe that no substantial damage has been done to any part of the extensive areas which were generously and freely placed at the disposal of the military authorities by owners and occupiers alike. For manœuvres of this somewhat novel class it is clear that there are large areas available, not only in Scotland, but in other parts of the United Kingdom, provided that the same public spirit that prevails in Scotland is displayed and equally generous invitations are given. The question of providing barrack accommodation of course turns on great questions of cavalry policy which are now being worked out. In saying that the circumstances of the recent manœuvres have but little bearing on these, I do not desire to be understood as casting doubt on the desirability of providing the cavalry accommodation in Scotland at the proper time.

*MR. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.): Did not the right hon. Gentleman undertake to make provision for cavalry barracks in Scotland?

MR. HALDANE: At the proper time.

MR. YOUNGER (Ayr Burghs): Having regard to the compliment which Mr. Haldane has paid to the Yeomanry, will he reconsider the question of reducing their pay?

MR. HALDANE: I think the hon. Member has not read the discussion which took place in another place. We have met the Yeomanry most satisfactorily.

Simla Municipal Committee.

MR. LAIDLAW (Renfrewshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for

India whether his attention has been called to the fact that, since October, 1905, the taxpayers of the Station Ward of Simla have been disfranchised, although, by the Punjab Municipal Act, they are entitled to have the election of three representatives on the Municipal Committee; and will he take steps to see that this body of ratepayers have their rights restored to them.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. MORLEY, Montrose Burghs): I have no knowledge of the facts in this matter; but I am advised that there is nothing in the Punjab Municipal Act to give the Station Ward of Simla a right to three representatives. I will make inquiry.

Port Stanley.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the work of improving the sanitation of Port Stanley, in the Falklands, has been delayed owing to lack of funds; what is the estimated cost of an improved system; and whether, in view of the official Report that the sewerage of the town is a matter of grave urgency, and that the system as at present constituted is a potential centre of disease, His Majesty's Government will give such financial assistance as will secure the provision of an improved system.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): The improvement of the sanitation of Port Stanley has been delayed, owing to the fact that no scheme has hitherto been put forward which appeared to be suitable, having regard to the size of the town and the financial position of the Colony. The Governor of the Falkland Islands, who has recently come on leave, has now submitted fresh proposals, which are at present under consideration and the initial cost of which he estimates at £1,355, to be followed by an annually recurrent expenditure of £631. It is hoped that measures may be decided upon before the Governor returns to the Colony, which will produce a great improvement in the condition of the town. The case does not appear to be one for the grant of financial assistance by the Imperial Government.

Repatriation of Chinese from the Transvaal.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can now say how many Chinese labourers have applied this year to be repatriated under the proclamation of last year.

MR. CHURCHILL: The number of applications since the last shipment (which took place on 17th January) is 417.

Mr. Deakin's Colonial Preference Scheme.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether His Majesty's Ministers have given any detailed consideration to the scheme of Colonial Preferences put forward by Mr. Deakin at the Colonial Conference; and whether that scheme has at any time been treated by His Majesty's Ministers as an offer from the Australian Commonwealth, in view of the fact that its author declared that no such scheme of preference as he had been foreshadowing or discussing had as yet been formulated in Australia.

MR. CHURCHILL: The proposals of Mr. Deakin were fully considered by His Majesty's Ministers, as will be seen by their speeches reported in the proceedings of the Colonial Conference.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND asked whether it was not the case that Mr. Deakin received neither from his Government nor from the people of the Commonwealth any mandate to make any offer whatever.

SIR. GILBERT PARKER asked whether it was not the case that Mr. Deakin did not put forward any detailed scheme concerning preference before the Conference, and that he merely wished to establish the principle which he advocated.

MR. CHURCHILL: All the proceedings of the Conference are published in the *verbatim* Report in the Conference Blue-book, and I do not think we ought to go behind anything that was said by anybody at the Conference.

Coolie Labour on the Panama Canal.

Mr. STANLEY WILSON (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if Command Paper 3527 of this year, dealing with coolie labour upon the Panama Canal, sets out the entire contract binding the coolie and his employer.

Mr. CHURCHILL: Yes, Sir, so far as I am aware. The contract referred to is of course applicable to labourers from Trinidad only.

Hague Conference and Naval Prizes.

Mr. GRETTON (Rutland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if, in view of the protracted delay in settling cases of the naval prizes which arose during the Russo-Japanese War, he will instruct our representatives at the Hague to bring the matter before the Peace Conference, with a view to arriving at some early decision.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Runciman, Dewsbury; for Sir Edward Grey): It is outside the scope of the Conference at present sitting at the Hague to investigate specific incidents that occurred during the Russo-Japanese War and act as a tribunal for dealing with them, but important questions of principle, to which those incidents gave rise, are engaging the attention of the Conference.

Finger Impression Identification.

Sir WILLIAM BULL (Hammersmith): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has any official information showing that the finger impressions of two persons, one in custody at Bloemfontein and the other at Cape Town, have proved to be identical; and whether, in view of the importance to criminal justice of the efficiency of this method of fixing identity being carefully scrutinised, he proposes to take any action in the matter.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.): It appears from the official report that there is no foundation for the statement that the finger impressions taken at Bloemfontein and Cape Town were those of different persons. They are the finger impressions of one and the same person who figured under one name at Bloemfontein and under another at Cape Town. The incident is a testimonial to the efficiency of the finger print system of identification.

Mr. A. A. Lynch.

Lord R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.) asked the Home Secretary whether it was true, as stated in the papers, that a free pardon had been granted to Lynch. [Nationalist cries of "Lynch!"]

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Who is Lynch?

Lord R. CECIL also asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would state the grounds on which the free pardon had been given.

Mr. GLADSTONE: The fact is as stated. If the noble Lord wants to ask me a further Question, perhaps he will put it on the Paper.

Inflammable Substances.

Mr. MORTON (Sutherland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the danger from fire caused by articles made of celluloid, zylonite, and other similar substances, which are highly inflammable when in proximity to artificial light; and whether he will consider the desirability of granting powers to local authorities with respect to the storage and sale of such articles.

Mr. GLADSTONE: This question has been under consideration for some time, and I have communicated with the London County Council on the subject of legislation.

Mr. H. J. TENNANT (Berwickshire) asked if the right hon. Gentleman was considering the desirability of appointing a Committee of some kind to investigate the matter.

Mr. GLADSTONE replied that that hardly arose out of the Question on the Paper.

Care of the Feeble-Minded.

Mr. T. F. RICHARDS (Wolverhampton, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in view of the fact that the terms of reference of the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded were extended two years after the appointment of the Commission, he will advise the widening of the terms of reference of the Royal Metropolitan Police Commission so that it may inquire into statements containing serious allegations against the police which have been submitted to it, but which could not be considered as they did not come within the scope of the terms of reference.

MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir. As I said in answer to a Question by the hon. Member for Deptford on 25th June, the terms of the reference to the Royal Commission on Metropolitan Police are fixed by statute and I have no power to alter them. The terms of reference to the Royal Commission on the Feeble-minded are not so fixed. Moreover, it is a matter of public importance that the Royal Commission on the Metropolitan Police should report speedily.

Crianlarich Railway Station.

SIR JOHN DEWAR (Inverness): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he is aware that the trains of the Caledonian and the North British Railways are timed to leave Crianlarich station in a way to cause the greatest inconvenience and delay to the passengers by the rival line; and if he will make representations to the companies to induce them so to rearrange their time tables as to prevent the travelling public suffering the inconvenience resulting from the present arrangements.

MR. RUNCIMAN (for Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE): The Board of Trade have communicated with both the railway companies concerned and are informed that every effort has been made to provide convenient connections at Crianlarich, but that in timing the trains consideration has had to be given to the requirements of the local traffic on the companies' respective lines and the necessity for maintaining train and steamboat connections at other places. My right hon. friend is sending copies of the companies' replies to my hon. friend. The Board of Trade propose to communicate further with the railway companies in the matter.

The Consular Service.

MR. HAROLD COX: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the services of British Consuls, stationed in foreign countries, are at the disposal of the Colonial subjects of His Majesty; and whether any offer has at any time been made by the Colonies to contribute to the cost of this consular service.

MR. RUNCIMAN: The answer to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative, but my right hon. friend would remind the hon. Member that for many such services fees are levied in accordance with the provisions of an Order in Council. The answer to the second part of the Question is in the negative, but in some cases, where a particular Colony has had special interests, the Government of that Colony have offered to defray or share the cost of maintaining a Consulate.

Horse Flesh for Human Food.

MR. RENDALL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he proposes to introduce legislation making the sale of horse flesh for human food legal in this country as on the continent, having regard to the proposals of the Colonial Conference that imported wheat and meat should be taxed on entering this country.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): My right hon. friend has asked me to reply to this Question. The sale of horse flesh for human food is legal in this country at the present time, provided that the requirements of the Sale of Horse Flesh, Etc., Regulation Act, 1889, are complied with.

Tuberculous Pigs.

MR. SILCOCK (Somersetshire, Wells): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been drawn to the losses which are being incurred by the farmers of this country owing to the number of carcases of tuberculous pigs which are being destroyed by order of the medical officers of health without any compensation being paid to the owners; whether he is aware that, in the majority of cases, there is no indication that a pig is suffering from tuberculosis until an examination of the carcase is made; and whether he is now prepared to bring in a Bill to provide that some compensation shall be given to farmers for the losses which they sustain when animals which have been apparently healthy are destroyed in the interests of the public health.

* MR. JOHN BURNS: I am aware that carcases of tuberculous pigs are destroyed, and that this involves loss to the owners. I am also aware that in some cases the disease is not recognisable during the life of the animal, but this is not always so, and it must not be assumed that the cause of the disease is necessarily not preventable. I cannot promise to introduce a Bill for the purpose suggested.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): Is it not the fact that there is no proof the disease is communicable from animals to man?

* MR. JOHN BURNS: The *obiter dictum* of the hon. Member is, I think, in conflict with the deduction to be drawn from the Report of the Royal Commission.

Elementary School Accommodation.

MR. MIDDLEMORE (Birmingham, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether the Board of Education are about to issue a circular to local education authorities requiring the recognised accommodation in all existing schools to be on the ten foot basis per child, and that the grants will for the future only be given on that basis; and, if so, under what section of what Act of Parliament the Board of Education propose to reduce the accommodation which they sanctioned in the plans on which the schools were built.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): As has already been announced in the prefatory memorandum to the Code, the Board propose to take steps to revise the numbers for which public elementary schools are at present recognised, with a view to securing eventually in every school a minimum of ten square feet of floor space for each child in attendance. The reduction of accommodation can be carried out under Article 19 of the Code, read in conjunction with Section 97 of the Elementary Education Act, 1870.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): When will the Return be issued?

MR. MCKENNA: I do not think a Return is needed.

Supplementary Estimates.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will give particulars of the Supplementary Estimates to be presented this session.

MR. RUNCIMAN: I have nothing to add to my reply of 26th June.†

Cocoa Imports.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he can state the amount of cocoa imported into this country from St. Thomé or from the Portuguese territory of Angola, from the West Indies, and from elsewhere.

MR. RUNCIMAN: I will send to the Votes a statement showing the imports and consignments of raw cocoa for the year 1906.‡ No separate figures are available in regard to imports from St. Thomé and Angola, these imports being included in the official records under the general heading of Portuguese West Africa, as explained by my right hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade, in reply to a similar Question in the House of Commons on the 12th of November last.§

Employment of Widows in Government Buildings.

MR. SNOWDEN (Blackburn): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether, in view of the fact that there are many widows, with children dependent upon them, who are unable to get employment, he will consider the desirability of giving preference to such for suitable work in the Government buildings over married women whose husbands are in regular employment.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clxxvi., 1389–90.

‡ See pages 1591–92.

§ See (4) *Debates*, clxiv., 1022.

*THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. HARCOURT, Lancashire, Rossendale): I do give a preference to widows.

Stranorlar Labourers' Cottage Scheme.

MR. C. MACVEIGH (Donegal, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Local Government Board have come to the conclusion not to advance more than £170 on an average in respect of the acquirement of a plot of land and the erection of a labourer's cottage thereon under the Labourers (Ireland) Act; and, if so, whether he is aware that this sum is wholly inadequate for the purchase of a statute acre and the erection of a cottage, and that, in consequence, the Stranorlar Rural District Council are unable to acquire more than half an acre of land; and whether, having regard to the wants of the labourers with large families, he will take steps to secure money sufficient to provide an acre of land, and so carry out the intentions of the Act.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. CHERRY, Liverpool, Exchange, for Mr. BIRRELL): My right hon. friend dealt fully with this matter in his reply to the Question put by the hon. Member for North Dublin on 17th April.† The Local Government Board have not fixed any definite maximum applicable to all rural districts, but they are endeavouring to keep the expenditure within the limit of £170 per cottage, so that 25,000 cottages and allotments may be provided with the £4,250,000 set apart for the purpose by the Act of last session. If the Stranorlar District Council proceed with economy, there is, in the opinion of the Local Government Board, no reason why a suitable cottage and acre allotment in that district should not be provided for about £170.

Boytonrath Evicted Tenant.

MR. LUNDON (Limerick, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland can he say whether the Estates Commissioners have received from Mrs. Flynn, widow of Patrick Flynn, an application for reinstatement, or in lieu thereof a farm of equal value to the farm held by her husband on the townland of Boytonrath, barony of Middlethird, county Tipperary, from which he was evicted in 1888 by his landlord, Michael Kennedy, of Cahir, county Tipperary; if so, can he state whether an inspector from the Commissioners have interviewed Mrs. Flynn, at present residing in Blair's Cottage, Drombana, near Limerick; will the Estates Commissioners, if they have not done so already, ascertain who holds the farm at present, where does he reside, and on what terms does he hold it; and can he hold forth to Mrs. Flynn any hope of restoration to, or of otherwise being compensated for, her husband's holding.

MR. CHERRY: The Estates Commissioners inform me that Mrs. Flynn's application has not yet been investigated. It was only received on the 15th of last month. The case will be fully inquired into in due course.

Abington Evicted Tenant.

MR. LUNDON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland can he say whether Mrs. McCoy has yet been reinstated in the farm of her late father and brother Matthew Duhy, of Rath, Abington, county Limerick, from which they were evicted over twenty years ago by Lord Cloncurry; and, if not, will he ask the Estates Commissioners to become mediators as to arrangement between Lord Cloncurry and Mrs. McCoy.

MR. CHERRY: Mrs. McCoy has applied for restoration to a holding formerly occupied by her father, and at present in the possession of a tenant who is not willing to surrender it. The Estates Commissioners will consider Mrs. McCoy's application in connection with any proceedings for the sale of Lord Cloncurry's estate which may come before them, and also in connection with the distribution of any untenanted land which the Commissioners may acquire in the district.

Mountshannon Untenanted Lands.

MR. LUNDON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland can he say whether the Estates Commissioners have recommended for farms on untenanted lands elsewhere, when and where obtainable, the following persons, Ellen Rafferty, of Knockroe, Kilteely, Simon Ryan, of Cross, Pallasgrean, and Arthur Graham, Lisnagry, Castleconnell, all in the county Limerick, in lieu of their evicted farms taken up by other tenants, or is there any residuary portion of the Mountshannon estate on which those parties were expecting to be quartered as yet remaining on which one or all of them could be settled.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clxxii., 998.

MR. CHERRY: The Estates Commissioners have fully investigated the cases of the persons named in the Question, and do not propose to provide them with holdings on any untenanted land which may be acquired.

Mountshannon Firing Prosecution.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the facts connected with the trial of Patrick Macnamara, who was indicted at Ennis on Thursday for firing at Frank McAuliffe with intent to do him grievous bodily harm, at Mount Shannon, on 15th April; whether he is aware that the prisoner was identified by two witnesses as having fired at McAuliffe from behind a hedgerow; that no witnesses were called for the defence; that McAuliffe, who was in possession of a farm which was formerly occupied by a brother of the accused, had been denounced in the district as a grabber; and that the jury acquitted the prisoner; and whether any further action is to be taken in this case.

MR. CHERRY: As the jury in this case acquitted the accused man no further proceedings can be taken.

Boycotting Prosecution at Leitrim Assizes.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the statement of Mr. Justice Wright at the Leitrim Assizes on Thursday that there are in the county three families consisting of fourteen persons wholly boycotted, and seven families consisting of twenty-two persons partially boycotted; that in Dowra and other parts of the county there was practically a state of lawlessness prevailing; that writs had to be served by registered letter, letter carriers had to be guarded, and threatening notices were posted; and whether, in view of this state of affairs and the failure to secure the punishment of law breakers under the ordinary law, the Government are still determined not to have recourse to the special powers which Parliament has placed in their hands.

MR. CHERRY: My attention has been called to the statements of the learned Judge referred to in the Question. As a matter of fact I was present myself in Carrick-on-Shannon on the day upon which they were made. I was glad, however, to ascertain from local inquiry that the disturbed area in the county is comparatively small, and not extending. On the contrary, I learn from the police authorities that there has been a slight improvement in that area during the last few months, while the greater part of the county is in a quiet and peaceful condition. As regards the latter part of the Question, I must refer the hon. Member to the Answer given by my right hon. friend the Chief Secretary to the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone on 13th June last, in which he stated that the Government still have confidence in the ordinary law properly and impartially administered.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): Does the right hon. Gentleman support the statement of the Judge as to the condition of the county?

MR. CHERRY: Certainly not. The learned Judge referred to certain districts only. The rest of the county is in a peaceable condition.

The Brady Boycotting Case.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, at the trial of eight men at the Leitrim Assizes on Thursday, who were charged with unlawful assembly at Drumkerrin on 7th July, 1906, the evidence showed that Thomas Brady was boycotted for caretaking two evicted farms, that his sons, aged seven and twelve, had to travel a distance of twenty miles to secure provisions under cover of the night, that on their return journey they were attacked by a mob of 600 persons and the provisions taken from them; whether all the prisoners were identified; whether he is aware that the Judge in his charge asked whether they were living in a Christian country, and said it was sufficient to see the extent of the boycotting to look at the starved appearance of the Brady boys; that the jury disagreed; and whether, seeing that this is the third time these men have been tried for this offence without any result, he will say what further action he intends to take in this case.

MR. CHERRY: As the hon. Member is probably aware, I myself conducted the prosecution in this case at the last Leitrim Assizes, so that I am quite familiar with all the circumstances. The question states, fairly accurately, the case made on behalf of the Crown and some of the comments made by the learned Judge who tried the case. The jury disagreed. It is not usual after three disagreements to put the accused on trial a fourth time, but, owing to the peculiar circumstances of this case, I am considering the propriety of adopting this course in the present instance. I desire to point out to the hon. Member, most respectfully, the evil effects upon the administration of justice in Ireland of Questions such as this, put as regards pending cases, in this House. I am quite sure that his sole object in putting them is to assist the Government in the detection and punishment of crime, but unfortunately an impression prevails in Ireland that his intention and that of his friends is, for political purposes, to show that the Irish people as a whole sympathise with crime. The effect of the Question is, I have no doubt, to excite political prejudice among the jurors, and to render it more difficult to secure a conviction in a clear case than it would otherwise be.

MR. MOORE (Armagh, N.): What I wish to know is if, after the three disagreements which have taken place in this case, the right hon. Gentleman will change the venue.

MR. P. A. MCHUGH (Sligo, N.): Is it in order for a Member of this House to take advantage of his position as a Member for the purpose of insinuating what he dare not state in public outside this House, viz., that these men, all of whom are friends of mine, are guilty of the charges preferred against them?

*MR. SPEAKER: I do not think that insinuation is conveyed. All the hon. Member asks is if, the jury having been unable to agree, the Government intend to take further action.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): But the Question went further in asking if the trial would take place in the same venue. That is an insinuation, I submit. I would like to ask a general Question, and that is—Is it in order, or is it proper, that a Question of this kind should be put with reference to a case that is still *sub judice*?

*MR. SPEAKER: I have always said it is extremely undesirable to ask Questions with reference to cases which are pending, and to that I adhere.

MR. MOORE: As a matter of personal explanation, my Question was not intended to presuppose the guilt of these people, but to ask for a fair trial of the issue, which we have not had up to the present. I ask, again, is it proposed to change the venue? Otherwise another trial will be a farce.

MR. LONSDALE said the juries had already disagreed at three trials, and he therefore asked if the venue was to be changed.

MR. CHERRY: It is, I hope, unnecessary for me to say that in considering these matters I am most anxious to decide on what is most advantageous in the interests of justice, but I cannot undertake to say in this House what steps it is proposed to take.

Tandragee Evicted Tenant.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland upon what grounds have the Estates Commissioners refused to reinstate Samuel Rainey upon his former holding upon the Duke of Manchester's estate at Tandragee, county Armagh, in view of the fact that both the landlord and the present holder of the land are willing that Rainey should be reinstated.

MR. CHERRY: The holding in which Samuel Rainey seeks reinstatement has been bought under the Land Purchase Acts by the present occupier. Having regard to the terms demanded by the tenant purchaser, the Estates Commissioners have not found it possible to arrange for Rainey's reinstatement.

Hollypark Farm Dispute.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he is aware that threatening letters have been received by Mr. Blake, of Hollypark, near Athenry, ordering him to give up a certain farm, and also by the servants of Mr. Blake, ordering them to give up their situations; and whether, in view of the attack with firearms made upon the residence of Mr. Blake on 23rd June, special protection will be afforded to these persons.

MR. CHERRY: The Answer to both parts of the Question is in the affirmative.

Estates Commissioners' Report.

MR. GINNELL (Westmeath, N): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if he can now say when the Annual Report of the Estates Commissioners will be available.

MR. CHERRY: The Estates Commissioners' Report for the year ending 31st March last is in course of preparation, and will, the Commissioners expect, be ready before the end of the present month.

Irish Departments Return.

MR. GINNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, when he will be able to lay upon the Table the Return of Irish Departments (Cost, Income, and Expenditure) promised on the 27th May last.

MR. CHERRY: My right hon. friend intended to lay on the Table, in connection with the Irish Council Bill, a Return relating to Irish Departments, but as the Bill is not being proceeded with the necessity for presenting the Return no longer exists.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Does not the right hon. Gentleman think such a Return would be of the highest value even to the Government?

MR. CHERRY: That had better be addressed to the Chief Secretary.

Irish Education Rules—Kilmeedy School.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will urge upon the Treasury the unreasonableness of compelling the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland against their wishes to enforce the Rule 194 in an exceptional case, such as that of Kilmeedy, in the county of Limerick, where the average attendance in both schools combined is over 100, being in the boys' school forty-three and in the girls' school sixty, and where both schools are efficient, and the girls' school was awarded, in 1904, the Carlisle and Blake prize for excellence.

MR. CHERRY: My right hon. friend has already given his most careful consideration to the principle involved in the rule referred to, and, for the reasons stated in his reply to the hon. Member's Question of 3rd inst.,† he is not prepared to advise any modification of the rule.

Insanitary Dwellings in Irish Towns.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, having regard to the fact that the prevalence of consumption in the cities and towns in Ireland is due chiefly to the want of proper housing accommodation for the working classes there, and having regard to the fact that the owners of the slum property in these cities and towns will do nothing to improve its insanitary condition, and that the local authorities hesitate to pull down the insanitary dwellings when they cannot raise money to build artizans' dwellings owing to the high rate of interest charged for it, he will take steps to inquire into the matter with the view to legislation next year in reference thereto.

MR. CHERRY: My right hon. friend the Chief Secretary is not in a position to add anything to the reply which he gave to the hon. Member's Questions on this subject on the 3rd inst.‡ My right hon. friend stated that the question of undertaking legislation would be considered, but that he could make no promise as to the introduction of such legislation.

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† See (4) *Debates*, clxxvii., 711–2.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, clxxvii., 711.

Crime in Limerick.

MR. O'SHAUGNESSY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. Justice Gibson, in opening the assizes for the county of Limerick, stated to the grand jury that there was only a small case of stabbing to go before them, which had its origin in another county, and that it was the smallest record of crime which he recollected in the county since the time he first came as assize Judge to the county nineteen years ago; and whether, having regard to this fact, he will press on the Estates Commissioners the necessity for securing the speedy reinstatement of the evicted tenants there, so that the peace of the county may be preserved.

MR. CHERRY: I am happy to say that the learned Judge did take a most favourable view of the state of county Limerick, which view is in accordance with all the information I have received from other sources. The Estates Commissioners are taking all possible steps which are open to them under the existing law to deal with the claims of evicted tenants in county Limerick as elsewhere.

MR. MOORE: Does this mean that the Estates Commissioners are to take action according to the amount of crime in a particular county?

MR. CHERRY: The hon. Member had better put his Question down.

MR. MOORE: I understood the right hon. Gentleman to assent to the proposition in the Question.

MR. CHERRY: The proposition I assented to was the statement that the Judge took a most favourable view of the state of the county.

Knocklong Demonstration.

MR. SHEEHAN (Cork County, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a force of police, to the number of fifty or thereabouts, was drafted into Knocklong, County Limerick, on Sunday last; will he state the reason for their presence on this occasion, and what was the special duty they were deputed to perform; and whether the ratepayers will be called upon to bear the expense incurred in this connection.

MR. CHERRY: The police authorities found it necessary to assemble a force of twenty-seven men at Knocklong on Sunday last in order to provide for the preservation of the peace. There was some reason to apprehend that a breach of the peace would be attempted, but I am glad to learn that nothing of the kind occurred. The police belonged to the county force, and no charge therefore will fall on local authorities.

MR. SHEEHAN: Why was a breach of the peace anticipated?

MR. JAMES CAMPBELL (Dublin University) asked the reason for the presence of the police.

MR. CHERRY: The police were under a misapprehension. They thought there were grounds for anticipating a breach of the peace. I do not think it wise to state the grounds.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): Is this the county the right hon. Gentleman described as being in a fairly peaceable condition?

MR. CHERRY: Yes, Sir.

MR. T. L. CORBETT: That is a very good comment on the answer.

Irish Dairy Inspectorship.

MR. FLYNN (Cork County, N.): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland) if he will state for what periods respectively Mr. Carroll, recently appointed instructor in dairying, studied dairy work at the Midland Agricultural and Dairy Institute, Kingston, England, and at the Ladelund Institute, Denmark; what certificates or diplomas he possesses; where and how he obtained his special knowledge of machinery; whether there was a considerale number of competent experienced creamery managers available; and whether, in view of the objection of the Irish Creamery

Managers' Association to the appointment of Mr. Carroll, the Department intend to retain him in this position.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR IRELAND (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): Mr. Carroll appears to have attended the Dairy Institute at Kingston for a period of six weeks, and at Ladelund in Denmark for three weeks. So far as the Department know there are no diplomas given at these schools. Mr. Carroll's knowledge of machinery was gained by twelve years experience in the works of Messrs. Hornsby at Grantham. A number of creamery managers were interviewed at the same time as Mr. Carroll, and of the five persons appointed four were creamery managers. The appointment is a temporary one and it is not proposed to dispense with Mr. Carroll's services. The Department do not admit that these appointments should be confined to creamery managers.

MR. FLYNN: But what experience had this young gentleman before he was employed on the work of the Department?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I have no responsibility for the appointment, which was made long before I became Vice-President of the Board, but he was trained under his father at Glasnevin and I understand from inquiries that he is doing his work satisfactorily. I have therefore no intention of disturbing this temporary appointment.

MR. T. L. CORBETT: Who was it that recommended him to the late Vice-President?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I cannot say.

Asking Questions on Behalf of Absent Members.

MR. GRETTON having put a Question to the Attorney-General for Ireland on behalf of an absent Unionist Member,

MR. CHERRY said he had written to the hon. Gentleman asking him to postpone it.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Is it proper for one hon. Member to ask a Question standing in the name of another unless he has authority to do so?

*MR. SPEAKER: It is desirable that such Questions should only be asked on the request of the absent Member.

Education (Scotland) Bill.

MR. MORTON: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he can yet say when the Second Reading of the Education (Scotland) Bill is to be taken.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): I am not yet able to name a day.

Scottish School Grants.

MR. GULLAND (Dumfries Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that inconvenience and financial loss is caused to School Boards by delay and irregularity in paying the educational grants; and whether he can see his way to devise some scheme whereby the grant could be paid in two half-yearly portions.

MR. SINCLAIR: Where there is any delay or irregularity in paying grants it will be found as a rule that it is due to the dilatoriness or neglect of School Boards in making the necessary returns. But if my hon. friend can furnish me with specific instances where inconvenience or financial loss has been caused to Boards, I will cause inquiry to be made. As to paying the grants in two instalments, I am not at present prepared to make any change in the existing practice.

MR. GULLAND inquired if there were not frequent complaints of Boards having to pay a heavy overdraft at their bankers because of these delays?

MR. SINCLAIR: Not frequent complaints—I only know of one.

Scottish Herring Fishery.

MR. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Prime Minister if he is aware that the herring fishing on the West Coast of Shetland has steadily fallen off since whaling companies embarked on the indiscriminate wholesale destruction of whales, and that this year it is a total failure; that now Balta Sound and the

East Coast are menaced; and whether, in view of the importance of the herring fishing, both from a local and national point of view, he will treat the matter as one of extreme urgency.

MR. SINCLAIR: As I have already informed my hon. friend, the former part of the Question is an expression of opinion and a matter of controversy. With regard to the latter part, my hon. friend is aware that legislation has been introduced to deal with the regulation of whaling, and it is the intention of the Government to pass that measure into law.

MR. CATHCART WASON: Has not the herring fishery fallen off as suggested in the Question?

MR. SINCLAIR: In some parts it has, but in other parts it has not. It is a matter of opinion.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrews Burghs): Is not the right hon. Gentleman aware that the consensus of opinion among Scottish fishermen is that great harm is done by this whale fishing industry?

MR. SINCLAIR: No, Sir; there are great differences of opinion on that point.

MR. MORTON asked if the Bill on the subject could not be proceeded with at once.

MR. CATHCART WASON suggested that as it was practically unopposed it might be taken at an early date.

MR. SINCLAIR said he feared that the Questions that afternoon did not carry out that view.

General Owen's Committee.

VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH (Maidstone): I beg to ask the Prime Minister if it is proposed to follow the recommendations made by General Owen's Committee; and, if so, what is the nature of those recommendations.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling Burghs): The recommendations of General Owen's Committee have been adopted with some modifications. It is manifestly impossible to make public the details of the armament of our fortified ports.

VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH: Is it advisable to attach much importance to the recommendations of inexperienced naval officers of very junior rank?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not know the bearing of that Question; I must ask for notice.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London) asked as to the business for the next two or three days.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said the only change in the arrangements as to public business for the week which had already been announced would be that, in consequence of the abrupt termination of the proceedings on the Finance Bill the previous night, the consideration of that Bill would be resumed either tomorrow night after eleven o'clock or on Friday after five o'clock, whichever was found more convenient for the House. He thought himself the Friday arrangement would be the more suitable.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (LAND VALUES (SCOTLAND) BILL).

Motion made, and Question put, "That the proceedings on the Second Reading of the Land Values (Scotland) Bill, if under discussion at Eleven o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order (Sittings of the House)."—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

The House divided:—Ayes, 252; Noes, 58. (Division List No. 273.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Alden, Percy
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Sir John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S. Geo.
Bennett, E. N.

Bethell, Sir J.H. (Essex, R'mf'rd
Boland, John
Brace, William
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brunner, J. F.L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, W. J. D.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Chas.
Byles, William Pollard
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Channing, Sir Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Churchill, Rt. Hon. Winston S.
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Corbett, C.H. (Sussex, E.Grinst'd
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cox, Harold
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Crean, Eugene
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Cullinan, J.
Curran, Peter Francis
Davies, Ellis William (Eifion)
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Devlin, Joseph
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dewar, Sir J. A. (Inverness-sh.
Dickinson, W.H. (St. Pancras, N.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Duffy, William J.
Dunne, Major E.Martin (Walsall
Edwards, Sir Francis (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Erskine, David C.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Evans, Samuel T.
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Field, William
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gardner, Col. Alan (Hereford, S.
Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Ginnell, L.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Gooch, George Peabody
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Rt Hn Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harvey, W.E. (Derbyshire, N.E.
Harwood, George
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazleton, Richard
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson, J.M. (Aberdeen, W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hogan, Michael
Holt, Richard Durning
Hope, W. Bateman (Somerset, N.
Horniman, Emslie John
Hudson, Walter
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jacoby, Sir James Alfred
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, Sir D. Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kilbride, Denis
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamont, Norman
Lardner, James Carrige Rushe
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lehmann, R. C.
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J.M. (Falkirk B'ghs
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.)
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick, A.
M'Kenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Marnham, F. J.
Massie, J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Menzies, Walter
Molteno, Percy Alport
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Nicholson, Charles N. (D'nc'str)
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Grady, J.
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Perks, Robert William
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, E.)
Radford, G. H.
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mptn
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E. (Dundee)
Robertson, Sir G.Scott (Bradf'd)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Roe, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Scott, A.H. (Ashton under Lyne
Seaverns, J. H.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Snowden, P.
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest. J.
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.
Thorne, William
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Walsh, Stephen
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)

Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Rt Hn E.(Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, Henry A.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
Whitbread, Howard
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Ashley, W. W.
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt Hn A.J.(City Lond.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bowles, G. Stewart
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. H. M.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fell, Arthur
Forster, Henry William
Gretton, John
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Helmsley, Viscount
Hills, J. W.
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Keynon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W.
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Liddell, Henry
Lockwood, Rt. Hn. Lt.-Col. A.R.
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Dublin, S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Marks, H. H. (Kent)
Middlemore, John Throgmort'n
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Moore, William
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Nicholson, Wm. G. (Petersfield)
Nield, Herbert
Parker, Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Percy, Earl
Randles, Sir John Scurrah
Rawlinson, John Frederick Peel
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sheffield, Sir Berkeley George D.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Thomson, W. Mitchell-(Lanark
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

LAND VALUES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*MR. REMNANT (Finsbury, Holborn), in moving the rejection of the measure, said that the Bill proposed a valuation of land in Scotland apart from the buildings and erections upon it, and thus sought to give effect to one of the recommendations of the Select Committee on the Land Values Taxation (Scotland) Bill of last session. It might be affirmed without hesitation that the overwhelmingly preponderant weight of the evidence heard before the Committee was against such a change in the law. Indeed, the Report adopted by the majority of the Committee could hardly be said to have been based upon any substantial evidence, being little more than a reproduction of some crude fallacies expounded by a solitary witness, a Mr. Adam. This Mr. Adam favoured the Committee with a hash of Henry Georgeite fallacies, and the Solicitor-General for Scotland in his Report favoured the Committee with a *rechauffé* of Mr. Adam's evidence. On the other side, the Committee had before them the evidence against separate valuation of a number of men of great business experience, known throughout Scotland as experts on all such matters. Against the findings of the Select Committee of last Session, after some months of inquiry, must also be set the findings, after years of inquiry, of both the Select Committee of this House on Town Holdings, in their Final Report presented in 1892, and the Royal Commissioners on Local Taxation, in their Final Report presented in 1901. Those bodies both condemned the separate valuation of sites. The Commissioners reported that—

> "Such a system would certainly be attended with considerable uncertainty, complication, and expense;"

and the Town Holdings Committee reported that—

> "The scheme is open to very great objection on the ground of the difficulty and uncertainty of the proposed system of valuation."

As regarded one of the most important parts of the Report of the Select Committee of last session—viz., that which dealt with the assessment of feu duties and the violation of contracts—the Prime Minister had recently, in answer to a Scottish deputation, completely thrown over the Report of that Committee in favour of the findings of the Royal Commission. They might, therefore, hope that, on further reflection, the Government would go further in the path of wisdom, and see that on the other questions at issue also the Report of the Royal Commission was greatly to be preferred. The overthrowing of the finding of the Select Committee had produced the most extraordinary results. They had the Solicitor-General for Scotland practically staking his reputation on the valuation of existing contracts and carrying it in Committee by his own casting vote, and then they had the Government once more throwing over their own law officer. They all knew what had happened in the case of the Trade Disputes Bill—viz., that the Attorney-General was thrown over. Now the Solicitor-General for Scotland had also been thrown over, and so they had these two gentlemen bottling up their opinions and remaining in this extraordinary Government. As regarded land that was built on, the proposal to value sites was futile to the point of absurdity. Since the value of land was included in the valuation of the rateable hereditament as a whole, land values were already taxed, and the Bill by separately valuing sites would not increase local revenue at all, any more than a man would increase his stock of fruit by cutting his apples in half. No doubt separate valuation of sites, if used as a basis for assessment, would increase the assessment on some houses and reduce the assessment on others, but the results so attained would be, as he pointed out in a draft report which he submitted to the Committee of last session, most anomalous. There were only two cases where the proposed method of valuation might yield an approximately reasonable result—viz. (1) when the site was already utilised to its fullest commercial capacity by the existing building upon it, but these cases were just those which the existing system of valuation completely covered; and (2) when the existing buildings were so unsuitable or ruinous that their presence added nothing to the value of the site, but these cases were so extremely rare as to be for practical purposes negligible. In all other cases such a method of valuation would lead to most anomalous results. In the case of a very considerable proportion of the older property in the centre of towns, the value of the site considered as cleared was greater than its value as a site for the buildings at present upon it. Yet the value of the property as it stood was greater than any value which could be obtained for the site alone, so that it would be absurd to pull down the buildings in order to utilise the site for new buildings. The site value was thus one which the proprietor could not realise, because in order to realise it he would require to sacrifice more than he could possibly obtain. The proposal to value the site was therefore consonant neither with justice nor with sound economics. The price which might be obtained for a single site if placed upon the market was no guide to the value of the whole of the sites in the street. The site came into the market as a building site for new premises when that stage was reached, through the growth of site value and the decay of the existing buildings, at which more could be obtained for the ground as a site to be cleared than for the ground and present buildings in their present state. In an important thoroughfare it might happen once every two or three years that a suitable site for a large building so came into the market, and when it did so happen there might be one or two purchasers in the market anxious to acquire a site in the neighbourhood for an important building or for some special purpose, and in that way a large price might be paid for the site. But the price would naturally be somewhat smaller if three properties happened at the same time to reach a corresponding stage of deterioration, and so come simultaneously into the market, and it would be vastly smaller if the number were fifty. As the number of sites coming into the market for the purpose of being cleared was limited, so was the number of purchasers wanting such important sites and able fully to utilise them. In the course of fifty years every site in the street might in succession come into the market in this way and obtain a large price, but in endeavouring to ascertain the present value of the aggregate sites in the street it was necessary to discount that long period. Failure to observe this had led to a huge over-estimate of the value of covered sites. It was obvious, too, in view of the foregoing considerations, that a single sale, or even several sales, of site property in a street, would afford to the assessor a most untrustworthy index to the true average value of a site in the street. The Report of the Select Committee of last session described the object of the proposed change in the law as being—

> "to measure the ratepayers' contributions, not by the value of the improvements on the land to any extent, but solely by the yearly value of the land itself."

The Bill ran directly counter to this object. The definition clause exempted "structural improvements," but not other improvements. In many agricultural holdings the expenditure upon the improvement of the soil exceeded the whole of the present capital value. How was the valuation of such improvements under the Bill to be reconciled with the professed object of its supporters? And in the case of urban sites large sums were often spent upon the preparation of the sites for building and the construction of streets and sewers. The Report of the Select Committee of last session stated—

> "In some instances exceptional and substantial expenditure has been incurred in preparing a site for building. As it originally stood the site was, on account of unevenness of surface, slope, or it may be the character of the soil, unfit for building operations. But judicious expenditure has rendered it suitable. In such a case, if the owner can satisfactorily prove the amount of the expenditure, your Committee consider that allowance ought to be made for it, at all events if it has been incurred within, say, twenty years of the date of the valuation. To make such an allowance would, in the opinion of your Committee, be in strict conformity with the principles of the Bill, which aims at relieving all owners of rating based on industrial expenditure."

The allowance proposed by the Committee was obviously inadequate, but even that was not made in the Bill. The Select Committee of last session also reported—

> "Discretionary powers should be given to the local authorities to exempt totally or partially from local rating any gardens or open spaces in private hands which in their opinion are beneficial to the community."

If such open spaces were not to be rated they ought not to be valued, but they were not exempted under the Bill. A good deal had been said about precedents for this system of valuation in certain of the Colonies, in Prussia, and in the United States. In the two last-mentioned cases no rate was levied on the site value as apart from the combined value of site and buildings. In New Zealand and some other Colonies a system of rating on unimproved value had been adopted, but reports showed that it had been in operation for so short a time that no substantial conclusion could be drawn as to its effects. It should be noted that the process of ascertaining the unimproved value necessarily presented much fewer difficulties in a new country. As regarded New Zealand, Dr. David Murray had shown that, as all the land in the colony which was subject to valuation, rural, suburban, or urban, had been disposed of by the Crown within recent years, its original unimproved value without crops, without stock—that was, in its primitive condition—was accurately known. The improvements were necessarily of recent date and were visible; they were being constantly surveyed, and it was easy to estimate their value. The circumstances of New Zealand were so entirely different from those of Scotland, that, so far from proving that what was done there could be done here, they showed that every element which made the ascertainment of land values possible was wanting in Scotland. If the Bill was to be considered as a means of procuring a rough valuation of the bare land value to satisfy curiosity or any other purpose which was an end in itself, that could be attained by means of a Government Return to be furnished by the assessors in Scotland. In this way it would cost nothing to the people in general, although, of course, it would throw a small charge on the Exchequer. If the valuation, however, was to be so accurate as to furnish a foundation for rating proposals, it must throw on the owners of land and buildings and ratepayers in Scotland a cost of several millions sterling. Dr. Murray estimated the cost for valuation alone in Glasgow at half a million, viz., £340,000 on the part of the owners and £160,000 on the part of the assessor. This figure did not include any allowance for litigation, which might be enormous, as of course each property was in a sense rated against the rest. If they allowed half a million for Glasgow, it would not be out of the way to estimate the cost of valuation in Edinburgh at £350,000 to £400,000, the acreage being very nearly as large. Dundee and Aberdeen, on the same basis, would not cost less than from £80,000 to £100,000, and so on throughout the burghs and counties of Scotland. It was impossible to follow any rule of thumb in proceeding from one place to another, as was shown by the evidence before the Committee, Mr. Binnie estimating the site valuation of Glasgow at one-fifth of the rateable value, while the Edinburgh site value was stated to be one-sixth, and Aberdeen from one-eighth to one-tenth. It had indeed been suggested that an official valuation of land would facilitate the process of buying land under compulsory powers for small holdings or for public purposes, but it was obviously much cheaper to value the comparatively small parts of land that might be so acquired when they were wanted than to start with a valuation of all the land in Scotland. The latter method was about as wise, from an economical standpoint, as to burn down a house in order to roast a pig. It could not therefore be imagined that the Government wished to throw this enormous burden on the people of Scotland unless a rating Bill was to follow, and this being so the question of an alteration in the system of rating was directly in point, as the merits of the change had to be shown to exceed the merits of the present system by the whole cost of making the change. What value then could be attached to the Bill as providing a new basis for rating? As regarded land that was built on, it had already been shown that it was absolutely futile. As regarded vacant land, it was true that the Bill would bring about a higher valuation. But the assessment of such property could yield only an apparent gain to the municipalities. It would only relieve the owners of occupied land of some part of the rates, and cast that part on the owners of unoccupied land. The present practice, under which owners were taxed when they had income with which to pay the taxes, was more convenient to them, and did not ultimately cause any loss to the public. People who talked about "holding up" land for a rise forgot that the owner and the municipality were really in the same boat. The object of a landowner who kept his land out of the market was to get a greater price for it at a later date when the value had gone up. In most cases self-interest would guide him wisely, and in the long run he would make a gain. In this matter the interests of the municipality and the owner were identical If the owner gained by waiting, the municipality also gained, because it got proportionately higher rates. Even the apparent gain from the capital valuation of vacant land would be very small. The cities and suburbs of Scotland did not differ materially in this respect from those of England, and in the debate on the English Land Values Bill of 1905 the present Chancellor of the Exchequer gave figures showing what the effect of the assessment of vacant land would be upon the actual rates in two districts, one suburban and the other metropolitan. In the case of Hornsey the result would be a reduction in the rates of that community only from 7s. 6d. to 7s. 2d. in the £. A similar calculation in regard to Fulham showed that in that case there would be a reduction of the rates only from 7s. 4d. to 7s. 2d. While worthless as a rating measure, the assessment of vacant land would do a great deal of harm by driving into the building market all gardens and other open spaces in private ownership in the populous parts of towns. There could be no question of the expediency of preserving such additional breathing spaces or "lungs" in towns, or of the undesirability of adding new piles of bricks and mortar within crowded areas. This drawback had been insisted upon in the Report of a Committee appointed by the Fabian Society to consider the housing problem, which stated—

> "The direct tendency of taxation of urban land values would be to bring into the market as building land those oases of garden and pleasure ground at present enclosed within our urban areas. The tax would therefore promote housing on exactly that class of land which in the interests of the health of the community should be most carefully kept vacant. Owners of gardens and fields in towns have already ample temptation to sell for building the valuable sites which yield them little or no actual revenue. The taxation of urban land values would increase this temptation. The sort of house-building which land taxation would facilitate is therefore exactly the worst sort in that it would tend to increase the density of our towns, and retard the movement of population towards the suburbs."

What was feared here had taken place in the United States, where for very many years (he believed from time immemorial) vacant land had been taxed on its full selling value. In New York there was far more dense over-crowding than in the worst slums in this country. For the sake of the whole community, and especially of the working classes in our cities and towns, he asked the House to refuse to take the first step towards the introduction of this cruel system of taxation into Great Britain. The system of valuation which this Bill proposed to introduce offered such unattractive results for a great waste of money that the proposal could be explained only as a first step towards carrying out a programme of confiscation of all rent by taxation, as advocated by the late Mr. Henry George. It had been explicitely admitted that that was the object of the real promoters. Mr. John Paul, Secretary of the Scottish League for the Taxation of Land Values, wrote—

> "The Scottish League for the Taxation of Land Values is the one organization in Scotland exclusively devoted to promote the teachings of Henry George."

It should be observed that Henry Georgeism was much less deserving of respect than the most extreme Socialism. Socialism was a considered theory, defended by some learned economists and affecting all forms of property equally. The "single tax," on the other hand, was a wild proposal for confiscating only capital invested in land, put forward by a half-educated fanatic whose views had been condemned by every competent economist who had condescended to examine them. It was noteworthy that when the name of Henry George was mentioned in this House it should find on the Liberal Benches so many cheers. It found plenty of supporters in the Select Committee, and it was mainly on his theories that the majority Report was based. When that fact was mentioned in this House he hoped he would be excused for taking up so much of their time in endeavouring to influence the House to reject the Second Reading of this Bill.

*MR. YOUNGER (Ayr Burghs), in seconding the Amendment, said that the Bill was one of such vast importance and of such far-reaching effect that it was the duty of those who had considered this question to do what they could in the House to awaken the people of Scotland to a sense of what was looming in the distance if the Bill were passed. The manner of its introduction was not what they would have expected. It was introduced under the ten minutes' rule, and in his opinion it was an abuse of that rule to introduce so controversial a measure under it. Nobody had an opportunity save the Leader of the Opposition of attacking the principle or the import of the Bill. He complained not only of the Bill being introduced under the ten minutes' rule but of the whole tone and import of the right hon. Gentleman's speech. No one knew better than the right hon. Gentleman himself that he was introducing a Bill which was designed to effect a complete revolution in the system of local taxation in Scotland, yet he not only had the audacity, there was no other word for it, to suggest that the Bill should be considered non-contentious, but said it only added one more to the columns in the valuation roll of Scotland, of which there were already eight. The right hon. Gentleman no doubt designedly spoke in that way in order to allay suspicion and not to arouse too soon that opposition of which after the debate on the Second Reading he hoped there would be a good deal. The Prime Minister in no uncertain language repudiated the proposals of the Solicitor-General and the majority of his Committee as to taxation of feu-duties, as he was certain to do after the declaration of the Lord Advocate in the Bill last year, certainly the most important fact embodied in the Report of which the hon. Gentleman had constituted himself a knight-errant all through Scotland in the winter. The Prime Minister's refusal to have anything to do with it thoroughly discredited the whole Report. The original suggestion for reform in the laws which governed every form of taxation of land value in Scotland arose from the mistaken idea, freely circulated, that feu duties escaped taxation. If the Select Committee did nothing else it completely exploded that mistaken notion. It was explicitly stated in the Report that the land values were fully taxed, and that should disabuse the minds of the people of Scotland of the notion that there was any exemption on the part of those who owned feu duties. That mistaken belief resulted in the Bill of last year, a Bill the principle of which was accepted by the House by a unanimous and overwhelming majority. He was glad to think the whole of the Committee were sensible enough to take the view they did in condemning that Bill as indefensible. There were also signs of a return to sanity on the part of the Corporation of Glasgow, because at a recent meeting the report of the Land Values Committee on this Bill, of which it approved, was not accepted by the

Corporation, and a motion was carried that the report of the committee be not accepted and that the Bill be referred not to the Select Land Values Committee, but to the Parliamentary committee, which was analogous to its being shelved. This Bill was to provide for the rating in Scotland of land at its annual value from year to year. The gross valuation only appeared on the roll at present, and those who supported this particular proposal quoted the minority Report, for which Lord Balfour of Burleigh was responsible, as a justification of their action in asking for the separation of land value from structural value. But they, unfortunately, ignored the fact that the recommendation was not for the separation of the land from the heritage—the system proposed in this Bill to form a basis for taxation—but for the separation of the two subjects, in order that where the gross value appeared on the roll the deductions usually made for poor rate and education rate should be taken off the structure only, and not off the land value. That did not in the slightest degree support a proposal of this kind, which was of a totally different character. In point of fact, the present valuation rested upon facts; the new valuation would rest upon a hypothesis. The Bill proposed that owners should return the capital value of the land, whether urban or rural, and it defined capital value as follows—

> "Capital land value in reference to any lands and heritages means the sum which such lands and heritages might be expected to realise in the open market at the time of the valuation if (1) divested of buildings, erections, or structural improvements, and fixed or attached machinery; and (2) sold free from all burdens, public and private, except building restrictions or other servitudes."

He would note, in passing, what his hon. friend had mentioned, that there were very many improvements on rural and urban lands which under this particular clause would be left in the land value. For example, in the case of rural land they had reclamation, drainage, fencing (he was not very certain whether this was a structural addition or not; he assumed that perhaps it was), a good water supply, etc. In the case of urban land there were levelling, preparation of sites, in many cases piling, street-forming, and all that sort of thing; and he wanted to ask whether this formed an intentional departure from the recommendation of the Committee, or whether they were willing to enlarge this definition clause as to improvements to something like the recommendation which the Committee made, namely, that the valuation should be the value of the land apart from buildings and all the improvements upon it, or in other words, whether it was to be the bare land entirely apart from improvements. What was needed, if this theory of land valuation was to be carried out was a definition something like what they had in New South Wales, which was as follows—

> "It includes houses, buildings, fencing, planting, excavations for holding water, wells, ring barking, clearing from timber or scrub or sweet briar, or noxious weeds, or laying down in grass or pasture, and any other improvements whatever, the benefit of which is unexhausted at the time of the valuation."

That was Section 68 of the Land and Income-Tax Assessment Act of 1895. He read that clause as embodying at all events what he believed to be the recommendations of the Committee, and he asked whether this was an intentional omission, and whether, as a matter of fact, the right hon. Gentleman and hon. Gentlemen who at present ruled Scotland had at last discovered that, if they included all these improvements, in a very large number of cases there would be no land value left, and therefore no basis of land valuation at all in many rural parishes of Scotland. He was inclined to think that was the true explanation. If it were so—he did not wish to use strong language—it was not a particularly worthy way of bolstering up their particular theory. What about the difficulty of the task which was set the assessor in valueing land on the principle of this Bill? In the first place, the assessor got no proper directions at all. There was insufficient definition of what improvements were, and there were many things not provided for. For example, they did not know the position as to shootings, fishing, minerals, or plantation, and a thousand and one other things of that kind. It was impossible to say from the Bill whether they were dealt with, and, if they were dealt with, how. He had a most interesting collection of the views of assessors published in the Scottish papers not very long ago on this Bill. He would read some of them. He knew the Lord-Advocate had claimed that he had expert opinion, and some evidence before the Committee in favour of this proposal. A couple of assessors gave a qualified approval to the scheme, but no professional valuator examained gave it any support. But the House would hear what the assessors had got to say about this Bill. Here were a few extracts. The first was assessor of a southern county; he said:—

> "The Bill is perfectly unworkable in its present form. We receive no guidance in it as to the manner in which we should set about to carry out its provisions."

Another one said:—

> "The duty laid upon the proprietors of lands and heritages will without doubt be puzzling to a degree, but to the assessors who have the carrying out of the provisions, more especially those who have to do with burghs where there are many small proprietors, the bulk of whom are in perfect ignorance that such a Bill is even contemplated or that it affects them in the least—the work must be herculean before it is possible to get a return from them of the capital value of their lands; and it is perfectly safe to say that it will take the corrections of several years before the Valuation Roll will be even approximately correct."

A third said—

> "I have not given the Bill any serious thought because I think the proposal so impossible to carry out with any degree of accuracy, that I think it is almost sure to be thrown out or abandoned."

Yet another assessor said—

> "Capital land value will be found to be a very difficult and puzzling item to estimate when one considers the deductions and restrictions to be ascertained as stated in the definition clause."

He had many other extracts of the same character. And he had a letter from an assessor, whose name he could supply privately if it was desired, who said exactly the same thing, that it was quite impossible, so far as he could see, in the county with which he had to deal, and in regard to the varied subjects which he had to value to estimate according to the directions given in the Bill. The system of valuation proposed was somewhat extraordinary. The site was supposed to be cleared of all structural buildings and improvements upon it; the assessor was to imagine it clear of all structural improvements. When he had done that, he had also to imagine a hypothetical market for a site which was purely hypothetical. Then he had to imagine a buyer who did not exist, in a market which did not exist, for an article which did not exist. And arising out of these hypothetical principles they would have a highly hypothetical result, and yet they had sensible men asking the people of Scotland to accept this as the basis of their future taxation. It was most astounding. How could the latter justify it? They attempted to justify it by pointing out that every now and then, under the existing system, a hypothetical tenant had to be discovered, and that, as a matter of fact, it was just as difficult to find a hypothetical tenant as to find a hypothetical buyer. He had for twenty years presided over the valuation of a typical Scottish county. They had had all kinds of subjects to value, and during the whole of the twenty years only one case had been appealed to the Court of Session, and on that occasion their judgment was upheld. His point was that they had dealt only with actual subjects for valuation; the factory and the land were in actual being, and there was no difficulty in finding the hypothetical tenant. They had an actual basis of fact to work upon and not a nebulous hypothesis. The Lord Advocate, when he made his speech, claimed that he had skilled witnesses who backed up his proposal. Two assessors had given him a certain amount of countenance; and one of them, Mr. Henry, of Glasgow, after making the best case he could for those who employed him, at the end of his evidence, being a thoroughly honest man, told the Committee that this proposal involved such an enormous change that, if the Bill were passed, and they were to tax these land values, it should not come into operation for a generation. The second argument in favour of the change was based on Colonial and foreign experience. His hon. friend below him had said all that was necessary on the subject. To bring in New Zealand as an example for dealing with the land of Scotland, seemed to him to be ineffective for the purpose. Unimproved land there was an ordinary staple commodity, and would sell in New Zealand at a price which was easily ascertainable. There was no difficulty whatever. All were taxed on the same principle and it did not matter, and there was no difficulty, but this Bill would establish a very different state of things in Scotland, where no unimproved land existed except perhaps on such places as the top of Schiehallion, and it would entirely change the incidence of taxation. He knew a country town where the rates at the present time were 5s. in the £, but if they were levied on land values alone they would be 30s. He could give an instance there of a factory building erected on one and three-quarter acres assessed at a rental of £1,040 and paying £260 in taxes. If taxed on its land value that factory would only pay £45. In another instance there were one and a half acres at a rental of £350 which yielded £8 10s., but under the new system the amount would be £45. In another case there were five acres containing large buildings rented at £3,850 a year which at present paid £962 in taxation, but if the basis were altered to land value taxation the amount would be £125. In this case all such deficiencies would be made good by the heavily-increased rates payable by the owners of villas and cottages with garden ground attached. He might take another illustration of farm land where the rental was £180 for about as many acres. He had had this farm's improvements valued, including the farm buildings, drains, roads, and everything else, and he found that while before the Liberal Government came into power they could get in Scotland twenty-five years purchase, and that at a rental of £180 the farm would be worth £4,500, the improvement alone reached a total cost of £5,125, which was £625 more than the capital value. In that case there was no land value left to tax. That was the position of most of the agricultural farms in the districts of Scotland which he happened to know. It had been admitted by experts that in many cases there would be no land values to tax, and it naturally occurred to those who had to do with county government where on earth the basis for local taxation was going to be found, and who in future would pay the rates. The effect of this Bill would be to compel people in Edinburgh and Glasgow to get the best price they could by feuing the land for the highest possible purpose, wholly regardless of amenity or obligation to existing feuars. The Leader of the Opposition upon a previous occasion asked the Secretary for Scotland if he would give to the House before the Second Reading an estimate of the cost of this Bill. A week or two after that he put a Question himself in order to elucidate this point, but he only got the usual answer that his premises were not admitted, and that there was not the smallest necessity to call for the estimate asked for. That was a way they had got at the Scottish Office. It did not appear to him that Dr. Murray's estimate was much out of the way. In one county there were 250 landed proprietors, and it was impossible for them to prepare their statements under £50 each. There were 4,000 feuars, and he did not think any of them would be able to fill up the schedule without expert assistance, which would cost them 30s. each. The cost would amount to about £20,000, and the assessors' outlay and remuneration had also to be provided for. It would be seen that even in a sparsely populated county in Scotland the expense would be very great. This was certainly a charge which ought to be borne by the nation and not by the individual. One of the most extraordinary proposals in the Bill was the exemption of railways. The Select Committee undoubtedly reported that in their opinion railways should be exempted from this particular form of rating, but they made no provision—and the Bill made no provision—for the fact that railways were rated on their commercial value, and if that commercial value was to remain as the annual rateable value, there would be precious little dividend left for any of the shareholders. He could not believe that that was intended. His hon. friend the Member for Dumbartonshire who saw this absurdity in the Report introduced a clause to deal with the point, but when the time came to propose it he incontinently dropped it. He had then moved it, but was only supported by the Unionist Members and the hon. Member for West Aberdeenshire whose acute mind realised the absurdity of the recommendation. If they were to have any change at all, what they wanted was not a narrowing but a broadening of the basis. Then local rates were increasing hand over hand. They were no doubt very burdensome, and he could understand the reasons which actuated rating authorities in endeavouring to find some new source of taxation and income. There was an enormous amount of personal property which escaped taxation. This did not use to be so, and if there was to be any change at all it ought not to be in the direction contemplated by this Bill, which was impracticable and unworkable. It would be very costly, and would cause an infinite amount of trouble in its administration, and it would be perfectly worthless for the purpose which hon. Gentlemen opposite had in view. There was only one thing to do with this measure, and it was that at the earliest possible moment it should be consigned to the Parliamentary scrap heap in which far better measures had found their haven.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day three months.'"—(*Mr. Remnant.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. URE, Linlithgowshire) said he was afraid he could not congratulate his hon. friend upon having thrown any fresh light upon this somewhat thorny and difficult topic. The subject was one which had been threshed out on four separate and distinct occasions. The sole object of this Bill was to set up a new standard of rating, a new measure by which to fix the contribution of the citizens to the rates. The Bill expressly stated that nothing contained in the measure would affect the question of rating or of assessment. Reference had been made to the divergence of view between the Lord Advocate and himself with regard to the scope of the application of the standard once it had been set up, and that had given rise to a personal note in the discussion which was always so welcome in the House. He would not fail before sitting down to respond to the personal note so vigorously struck by his two hon. friends opposite. He hoped to satisfy even them that the difference between the Lord Advocate and himself with regard to the scope of the application of the standard once it had been erected was a difference which was confined exclusively to that and was not such as to debar him from rendering such humble aid as he could in carrying this measure and in co-operating heartily with the Government of which he was a member. He invited the House to consider the only two questions which seemed to be worthy of attention in regard to the measure. The first was: Ought they to set up a new standard by which to measure the citizen's contribution to the rates? The second question was: Could they set up a new standard? It was obvious that an answer in the negative to either or both of these questions would end the measure. To the question: Ought they to set up this standard? he answered unhesitatingly, yes. He said so, because it would lead to a more equitable distribution of the rates on the shoulders of the citizens. At the present moment, to defray the cost of the local services on which the comfort and well-being of the individual citizens and the prosperity of the community so largely depended, all the citizens were laid under contribution, and the amount of their contribution was determined by the yearly value of the houses they owned or occupied, or of the business premises in which they carried on their calling. There were two ingredients involved in the citizen's obligation to pay rates. There was, in the first place, the personal benefit which the citizen, his tenantry and retainers, derived from the local services to which the rates were devoted; and there was, in the second place, the advantage to the citizen's property, the maintenance of or the increase in its value depending largely upon the enterprise of the community and the expenditure of the rates contributed by his fellow citizens. In the Scottish rating law both these ingredients were recognised, and a certain portion of the local rates fell upon the owner and a certain portion upon the occupier. They were not equal divisions, but some sort of arbitrary divisions. It was quite plain that to apportion the burden according to the precise amount of personal benefit derived, with any approach to scientific accuracy, would be impossible. On the other hand the advantage to property was capable of being gauged and estimated, and the citizen's ability to pay the rate was determined by the yearly value of the house which he occupied, or the yearly value of the business premises in which his calling was carried on. No attempt was made under the present system to sever the value of the buildings erected on the land from the value of the land itself. No attempt was made to estimate what each contributed to the total value. It was, indeed, a rough and ready test which was applied at present, and necessarily so, because valuable premises were often occupied by firms and individuals whose profits were small and approaching the vanishing point.

Millionaires might live in garrets, and they sometimes did, while a man of slender means might occupy commodious premises, because he was blessed with a large family or a fashionable wife. The present standard, therefore, was only a rough and ready method of determining a man's ability to pay rates. There was no use longing after the ideal, for it was hopelessly unattainable. The question was: Could they have a better system set up which would result in a fairer and more equitable distribution of the burden so that they should as far as possible lay the heavy burden on the broad back and ease the burden on the backs of those least able to bear it? In the selection of a standard of rating, their area of choice was very small. Some wiseacres in that House—formerly, but not at present—had suggested that the area for the standard of rating should be bank stock, railway stock, or Consols. If any one of those three was selected, it must be obvious that there would be no ratepayers in many parts of Scotland, and that those who were ratepayers to-day would sell out, so that to-morrow there would be no ratepayers at all. It was obvious that for the purpose of rating they must take something which the citizens had and could not do without. If they were all equal citizens, a poll tax would do, but as they were not the rates must be levied on the land, or on the buildings erected on the land. That was what the Bill proposed to set up. It was proposed to exclude altogether from the rating standard, as at present existing, houses erected and structural improvements on the ground. It was perfectly obvious that there would be very great difficulty in ascertaining the value of such improvements, as the hon. Member opposite had suggested. The Government proposed that the value of the land, apart from the buildings and structural improvements upon it, should be taken as the new standard of rating. That was a standard which expanded or contracted, not like the present standard according to the enterprise and the expenditure of the individual owner of the property, but according to the energy, enterprise, and expenditure of the community surrounding it. If a man was minded to erect handsome and commodious buildings, to spend generously upon wages and material, and to do his very best, he could do so under the new standard without being haunted with the idea that whatever improvements he made would instantly be followed up by a substantial rise in his rates. He would feel assured, because he would know that the measure of his contribution to the rates would be determined by the value of the land. On the other hand if a man for some reason, or for no reason at all, chose to allow his property to fall into a state of dilapidation and decay, or if he chose to have on his land inferior property unsuitable for the site, he would not thereby escape the rating which was applicable to the value of the site he possessed, and which on account of his neglect or heedlessness was not being fully utilised. He would not, whatever the misuse he might put his property to, pay any less rates than he would have had to pay if he had put it to the best use. Accordingly the objection to the present standard was that it operated as a burden upon industry, it operated as a deterrent to a man to spend wisely and generously in wages and in material in putting his property to the very best use possible. It discouraged a man from spending freely and generously and doing the best he could with his property, because he knew that when the value was increased the burden of higher rates would fall upon his shoulders. Under the new system no man who had spent generously in doing the best he could with his property would be asked to pay more than his fair share of the rates. It was a standard of rating which had a direct and immediate connection with the expenditure of the rates. When the rate expenditure was wise, prudent, and generous, this standard expanded and enlarged; when, on the other hand, the rate expenditure was unwise, prodigal, extravagant, and foolish, it contracted. But it never expanded or contracted according to the wisdom or the unwisdom of the individual owners of property. That was the method which the Bill proposed to set up. The House would very naturally ask, although the application of the standard was expressly excluded from the measure, what, in general terms, would be the effect of adopting this new standard. The effect would obviously be threefold. In the first place, a number of citizens who at present contributed nothing to the rates would be included in the ranks of ratepayers. These were men who at present held building land which was standing vacant and unbuilt upon, or which was used merely for temporary purposes or for agricultural purposes, although really within the building area and zone. He would deal with these three points when he came to the question of the practicability of their scheme. These men at present escaped rating altogether or were rated merely upon the agricultural value or upon the rent derived from the temporary erections which stood on their property. The second effect would be that men who were insuring their property, men who held valuable sites upon which the buildings were either being allowed to dwindle into dilapidation or decay, or sites which carried buildings obviously unsuitable to the situation, which did not take the full value out of the site, and which were inferior to the site on which they stood, would be asked a substantial increase to the rates on that which they at present paid. In the third place, men who were at present owners of property upon which there were handsome buildings and erections of better value comparatively than the site on which they stood would require to pay a smaller contribution to the rates than they did at present. He would offer an illustration as an example of a wealth of instances of the enormous value given to land by the progress and industry of a surrounding community. He took one illustration, because it afforded a good example for a demonstration of all his points. Some three years ago there changed hands in the open market agricultural property in Princes Street, Edinburgh, at the handsome figure of £100,000. Upon the site at the time there were comparatively modern buildings, which were entered in the valuation roll at £2,750. The purchaser proceeded to remove those buildings. They were obviously unsuited to the value of the site on which they were erected, although they were comparatively modern buildings. He proceeded to expend some £40,000 on new buildings suitable for the site. Although the former owner was rated at £2,750, he really gained £100,000 for the site alone, because the instant the new owner purchased he proceeded to clear away the buildings which then existed. A very modest return on £100,000 was 4 per cent., and, accordingly, if the owner were rated upon the land value, he would stand in the roll as proprietor of ground worth £4,000; but under the present system they would add to the valuation (and correspondingly to the rate) £1,600, which was 4 per cent. on £40,000 spent on the buildings. Accordingly in the valuation roll for this year the property would probably stand at £5,600 instead of £2,750. A century and a quarter ago, when the ground was first given up, its capital value was between £60,000 and £70,000. In the first place, there was an illustration of an enormous increase of value due entirely to the progress, prosperity, and expenditure of Edinburgh; in the second place, there was an illustration of property entered in the valuation roll at £2,750, substantially less than the yearly value of the ground alone; and in the third place, there was illustrated the very great injustice of rating an enterprising man upon £40,000 which he had spent in erecting handsome, palatial buildings. That was the case of the Bill upon the question whether or not they ought to set up a new standard. He now turned to the second question. Could the proposed standard be set up? Was it reasonably practicable to set it up? He stated the case in that way, because nobody now said, though some time ago they did, that it was impossible to value land apart from the buildings erected upon it. It was done every day in his own experience. Nobody maintained that it could not be done. Everybody now knew that it could be done, but the question was, "Is it reasonably practicable?" That resolved itself into whether the objection usually stated, which was that their valuation was necessarily arbitrary and uncertain, and that it was expensive and difficult, was well founded. To say that their valuation was arbitrary and uncertain was merely to say that they were in the region of valuation, but not in the region of mensuration. Accuracy and precision were not only unobtainable in the region of valuation, but also unintelligible. Accuracy and precision they might have upon questions of fact; but when they were in the region of valuation they were in the region of speculation and opinion, where necessarily they must go by guess work more or less near the mark according to the experience and skill of the man who guessed. After all, no great harm was done, for let the House never forget that what they were in search of was really a standard by which to measure the citizen's contribution to the rates. Although they might have in one local area what they called high valuation and in another low a valuation comparatively, amongst the ratepayers themselves no injustice was done, because they were all valued upon a high scale in one area and upon a low scale in another area. In Scotland there was an annual revision of the valuation roll so that any gross error made in one year was readily corrected in the next, and no great harm was done. Let it never be forgotten that the present system, which had been in vogue upwards of fifty years, so far as machinery and method were concerned, was based upon speculation and opinion. They would suppose, from what they had heard, that under the Valuation Act of 1854 all they had to find out was the actual rent paid for premises and then to insert it in the rent roll. But the basis was a totally different one. The basis in the Statute of 1854 was not the actual rent which the owner put in his pocket, but the yearly value on which the property might be reasonably expected to pay. Whenever they approached the Statute of 1854 they were in the region of expectation and therefore out of the region of accuracy and precision. To speak of reasonable expectation as being anything else than speculation and opinion seemed to him absolutely absurd. No doubt he would be reminded by hon. Gentlemen opposite that the Valuation Act of 1854 first directed that where there was an actual rent that was to be taken as the yearly value of the property. True, but in how many instances was there no actual rent to go upon at all? The vast majority of good houses in the west end of Glasgow and Edinburgh, in all their large towns and in many other towns, were owned by their occupiers. There was no actual rent there, and they must proceed as best they could to find out what an hypothetical tenant would give, and he entirely agreed with the hon. Member for the Ayr Burghs that the hunt for the hypothetical tenant was an even more baffling pursuit than the hunt for the hypothetical buyer. In nine cases out of ten they had to grope for the value. The assessor had to do the best he could. He knew many houses which never had been and never could conceivably be let. Yet the assessor had to put a yearly value on them with the penalty of getting no rates out of them if he did not. Further than that, wherever they found any other consideration than the rent, or wherever they had a lease for twenty-one years and upwards, or a lease given to a favourite child or to a faithful servant, they tossed aside the actual rent altogether. The Statute so directed and enjoined, and there again they were left to grope for what was the true yearly value. When they considered that probably the large majority of substantial houses were in the occupancy of their owners, and that wherever they had any consideration other than rent or a lease of twenty-one years and upwards they were thrown back upon speculation and opinion, the House would see that it was preposterous to suggest that the present system was based upon yearly rent. It was based upon reasonable expectation. It was in the region of speculation and opinion. The best test of all as to the success of the present system and the efficiency with which the assessors performed their duties was this: From the whole of Scotland last year there came not a single appeal against the assessors' valuation to the Supreme Court from any one of the great population centres. [An HON. MEMBER: It shows how easily it is done.] From the whole of Scotland there came not a single appeal against the assessors' valuation, but the valuation of dwelling houses was child's play as compared with the valuation of business premises which in nine cases out of ten were in the occupation of the owner and the annual yearly value of which was always a matter of speculation and of opinion. The assessors in Scotland had to value an infinite variety of such business premises, foundries, distilleries, breweries, coal workings and the rest, not one of which had ever been let. How was the assessor to perform this apparently impossible task? If the duty was put upon them for the first time, it would be said to be impossible for men to do it, at all events without some of the attributes of omnipotence. The Valuation Act of 1854, which cast the duty upon them, would, however, never have been passed if the views of his hon. friend had been given effect to. How did the assessors perform the task at present? They performed the duty by the application of a series of artificial rules, not one of them obligatory or statutory, but serving as indexes. All might be taken into account but not one of them could be exclusively followed without leading to some blind alley. Yet the overseers performed the work with perfect ease. Sometimes a percentage was taken of the expenditure on buildings and machinery; usually they took the value of the land on which the business premises were planted. That was the usual rule. They took the value of the land. Sometimes they took a percentage on profits, sometimes they took the floor space and sometimes the output or working capacity. Sometimes they had the valuation of a neighbouring lot to guide them, and then they had to make allowances for comparative advantages and disadvantages, arriving in the end at a result eminently satisfactory both to the ratepayers and to the owners themselves. Thus it was as he had said, that positively there was not a single appeal coming from any one of the great industrial centres in Scotland, although in every case these valuations were reached by speculation, by opinion, by guess work, by looking at this circumstance and that, having in many cases no more guidance and in many cases much less than was to be found in estimating the value of the land without the buildings or the property upon it. That was done every day. There were three cases in which land might have to be valued without the buildings. There were the cases in which they might have the land already covered with buildings. How were they to proceed? They had to imagine the buildings on that particular plot of ground cleared away; they had to imagine what if they placed a ticket "For sale" on the property a willing buyer would give to a willing seller for that site, cleared of the buildings, with all its environment as they found it at the present time. The valuers had a rule-of-thumb method by which they reached the value of the buildings. How was the task performed? It was done by finding the nearest instance of a sale in the open market. He had never found a valuator yet who was not able with perfect ease to tell how much ought to be allowed for buildings, and even in keenly contested cases he had never yet found, and he thought the Lord Advocate would agree with him, one where the valuators on each side were in disagreement as to the value of the buildings. The Lord Advocate and himself had never yet had to argue the question of the value of the buildings. In the second case, the site might be actually vacant, and the value was arrived at by comparison with other sites, and allowance for relative advantages and disadvantages. The third case was that of building land entirely vacant or in use for agricultural purposes, but undeniably within the building zone. The valuer found out at what price ground in the vicinity had changed hands in the open market. He then found out at what rate feuing had been progressing in the neighbourhood. He put his value on the particular plot in hand, and considered how many years it would be before that plot would be utilised for building, and by discounting for that number of years reached the present value. That was a matter of everyday practice, and there was no mystery and no difficulty about it. The hon. Member had objected to the proposals contained in the Bill on the ground of the expense of the inquiry. He did not understand him to say, however, nor could he understand him to say, that if the House came to the conclusion that it was desirable to set up this standard, the expenses which arose would be absolutely prohibitive. The question was rather this: Would the expense be so far out of proportion to the advantage to be gained that the House on considering the question should at once drop the proposal? The estimates he had heard as to the cost of making this valuation had been, in his opinion, greatly exaggerated. It was made a matter of complaint that the Government presented no estimate. The same objection might have been urged against the Act of 1854, which made a much more sweeping change in valuation than this Bill would effect. At present they had in Scotland the most efficient assessment machinery. They had more skilled and quick-witted valuers than any country in the world. How could the Government estimate the expenditure in a matter where the personal factor entered so much in to the consideration of the problem? Each area knew best its own need. In some areas there were assessors who would be able to accomplish all that was necessary without outside assistance. In others a considerable amount of help might be required. An estimate would be entirely valueless. It was wiser and safer to leave each area to determine for itself the amount of assistance which its assessors would require. As to the difference between the Lord Advocate and himself upon the true scope of the Bill if it became law, his right hon. friend held, for good reasons no doubt, that the definition of owner under the new Rating and Assessing Act which was intended to follow this Bill should remain as it was under the present Valuation Act. He agreed that under the present Act those who drew feu duties were not included in the definition. Under the old law they were included in the category of owner, and were made to contribute to the rates, but under later developments of the law that view had changed. He held that those who drew feu duties should be included in the definition. It was a question of degree, but it was not a matter which could affect his views with regard to the valuation that ought to take place. This was nothing more nor less than a Bill to secure a valuation of all the vacant land in Scotland, free from the buildings and erections upon it. It would be idle to pretend that mere curiosity prompted the measure. There was an ulterior object in view. This was only a preliminary investigation to an entire alteration of the basis of rating, which would be more or less far-reaching according to the relation which the bare value of the land bore to the valuation of the composite subject. The Bill was designed to supply the present lack of information, and in that light he commended it to the House. The Government were under no misconception with regard to the object. Whatever the value of the land might turn out to be—and, in his judgment, in the populous centres it would turn out to be much greater than any one had anticipated —the Government were the victims of no delusion. They would not consider they had chanced on an El-dorado, some gold mine from which they might seek the precious metal to relieve the ratepayers, or some infinite source of revenue from which to replenish their pockets. Whatever the value of the land might be, they would regard it as nothing more nor less than a standard of measure by which to fix the contribution of the ratepayer to the rates, and to secure, as he firmly believed it would, a nearer approach to justice and equity than they had ever yet seen.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): I am disposed to regret that the audience I see before me is in so large a measure composed of Scottish Members only, because everybody knows that if we are going to change the whole principle of rating in Scotland, and to change it in obedience to certain abstract theories with regard to what is called the unearned increment of land, those principles, if adopted for one part of the United Kingdom, must by logical necessity be extended also to the other parts. That, of course, must be not only the opinion, but the wish of every man who supports this Bill. It is, therefore, all the more desirable that those who are affected by the Bill—not only Scotsmen, but Englishmen and Irishmen—should understand what is the change the Government have in view and what is their motive for the change. There is a dispute between the learned Gentleman who has just spoken and my hon. friends who moved and seconded the rejection of the Bill as to the extent of the cost the Bill will involve. My hon. friends on the highest authority say it will be very great, and the learned Gentleman thinks they exaggerate. The learned Gentleman admits, however, that in the earlier years of the new valuation roll the expenses are likely to be considerable. Why are the Government going to impose on the ratepayers of Scotland a tax, an obligatory expenditure, which, as I and my friends think, will amount to a very large sum, and which the promoters of the Bill admit will be an important and far from negligible sum, unless they are going to make some immense and fundamental change in the incidence of taxation and the source from which they are going to get their revenue? Of course, everybody knows that is the object of the Government and of those behind them. It is an open secret in Scotland that the forces moving the Government are those who accept to the full the theory that every owner of land is a man who owns what he has no right to own, and that it is the duty of the State at the earliest possible moment to relieve him of his ill-gotten property. That is the avowed view of the most earnest advocates of the group of measures of which this is one. Did the learned Gentleman hear the cheers from his own friends which greeted the allusion of his hon. friend behind him to the doctrines of Henry George? The doctrine on which the Bill is founded is the doctrine of Henry George. I ask the Government why the localities in Scotland are to be burdened with this heavy charge, unless it is to bring into the area of local taxation sources hitherto untapped. Those sources, though they have indirectly paid their share, are the feu duties and the rents paid by long leaseholders of houses; and undoubtedly the object of the learned Gentleman and of those who promote the Bill is to tax the owners of feus and the owners of long leases.

MR. URE: The long leaseholder is already taxed under the Valuation Act.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It would ill become me to dispute with the learned Gentleman on a matter of law, but does he mean to say that there is anything in Scotland analogous to that which we have in England of a man taking a house for forty years and paying all the rates.

MR. URE: What I did say was that the long leaseholder as we call him in Scotland, has to make good his contribution to the rates in proportion to the amount of rent he derives. When he pays his rates, he deducts from the rent which he pays to the long leaseholder the proportion of rates applicable to the amount of rent which he pays.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think that we must be at some cross-purposes in this matter. I do not think that there is any serious dispute between us. The principle is fundamental, but about the facts of the case I do not think there need be any dispute. At all events let us confine the discussion to the feuars. To use a somewhat vulgar expression, would there be any steam behind this Bill unless it was the intention of those who are pressing for it in Scotland to include in the net of local taxation the existing feu duties? Every human being knows that there would not. Everyone knows that the Solicitor-General for Scotland would like to include the feu duties. Every human being knows that the Prime Minister, the Lord-Advocate, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, frightened not too soon by the well-founded alarm instilled into those who hold the ordinary views with regard to property in Scotland, have declared that they do not mean to break contracts. If they do not mean to break contracts at some future time, then this Bill will most certainly lose its most ardent supporters in Scotland; and it is in the hope that on this Bill will be founded another Bill which will break contracts that we have had the agitation which has induced the Government to enter upon the perilous course which they are now pursuing. The right hon. Gentleman has openly and avowedly said that he wishes entirely to alter the standard of rating, but I say that it is impossible to alter the standard of rating without committing the grossest injustice to particular individuals and to corporations; and this is manifest on the face of it. What does the hon. Gentleman want to do? He wishes to transfer from buildings and from business interests and machinery, entirely to the owner of the soil, the whole cost of every species of expenditure which goes on in a given urban or rural community. I will deal with the rural question presently, and I will now confine myself to the urban owner. In the first place I would ask on what principle of equity is that particular class concerned with the town to pay all the cost not merely of maintaining the fundamental needs of society, but of cheapening a large part of the luxuries of society? If you consider, a man may own land in a town and yet may not live in the town at all; he may have invested his savings in the feu or ground site in the town. Why put on his shoulders and on those of his fellows the whole of the burdens? The only conceivable justification of such a course is, after all, to say that everybody else in the town had by his own exertions obtained the valuable privilege which he enjoys; he has either built a house or made a business or done a large share of the work which conduces to his own well-being, whilst the owner of the soil is merely the owner of the unearned increment. That is the only justification of the inequities of this Bill. The doctrine of unearned increment is not held in its logical form, as I will come to show directly, in certain parts of the Bill. Does not the House see that it is perfectly true to say that in a civilised community nothing is of value to the owner except through the exertions of the society in which he lives and the predecessors of that society; that we are all inheritors of wealth; that even the weekly wage earners are inheritors of wealth, or at all events of a subsistence—put it as low as you like—to which they are only in part contributors? Do not let me make my argument too wide; I know that the House does not like generalisations to be too extended in their scope. Take the case of a man who owns a house in a thoroughfare which has become a fashionable thoroughfare and whose business opportunities go up; he makes a great deal of money by the mere accident of the situation of his premises, and he gets his wealth just as much from unearned increment due to the society in which he lives as the owner of any site in the very centre of this great metropolis. Who are those that contribute to this unearned increment? Hon. Members sometimes talk as if the people who had made the unearned increment of the plot of land were the other citizens of the town, and they only. That is a proposition which no man can believe if once he grasps the fact that it is not the living citizens, but the dead citizens who have done even more than the living citizens; and in the second place, it is not the community who collect the rates or those who benefit by the rates who alone have been concerned in this social development. What would Glasgow be if you circumscribed it within walls, and did not bring into the general system of which it is a part, the fellow workers, not only from every part of Scotland but from every part of the world, who have contributed to its development just as much as its own citizens? Then if that is true, why are you going to take away from a particular individual in Glasgow his unearned increment and hand it over, not to the people who have contributed to the making of that increment, but to the ratepayers of Glasgow, who, it is admitted, have not taken any hand in bringing that increment about? The doctrine of unearned increment if it is once really understood will be seen to have very unexpected consequences, and if driven to its logical conclusion would produce legislation which it would tax even the ingenuity of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor-General for Scotland to find any cause for. The truth is that it is simply mere robbery, as far as I can see, to say to a man who has bought, perhaps while the late Government were in power, a site near some great town in Scotland, and say to him: "You bought that on the faith of the rating system which prevails in England and Scotland and which you had every reason to believe would be a permanent system. You bought at a price based on that system of rating which you thought would be carried on. That site was to be valued, let us say, at £50 a year, and henceforth it is to bear rates at £70 a year." The Solicitor-General knows perfectly well that if you are going in our great towns to throw the whole burden of the rates on the land the cost of the rating will be a great deal more than 20s. in the £. It must be so; it is inevitable; and, therefore, you are not merely going to diminish the resources of this unfortunate purchaser of a site, but you are going to deprive him of all that he has got; you are going, first, to take every shilling which he has in the world, and then you are going to leave him burdened with a sum costing per £ more than the whole value of the land of which he is the owner, and which he has bought out of his own savings. If the word "robbery" is not applicable to that transaction will any Gentlemen tell me what is applicable? What is proposed to be done? Apparently the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer have been frightened out of interfering with the feu duties; that was a breach of contract. But there is no express legal contract in the case which I have been discussing; therefore the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Lord Advocate have nothing to say to this unfortunate purchase of a site in or near a big town. But this House has surely to consider the equities of the case, and I again wish to ask why the trustees of an estate, who have purchased land quite recently close to a big town, or within a big town, believing that the land was to be rated upon the ordinary equitable principles to which we are accustomed, are suddenly to find that not only every single shilling which that land has brought in is to be taken for purposes from which the owner of the land gets no profit, but that the owner of the land is to be saddled besides with a total charge of 3s. or 4s. in the £ more than the whole value which the land brings in. That is a transaction which, I am convinced, if only hon. Gentlemen will consider it, they will see is perfectly unjustifiable. The hon. and learned Gentleman did not say anything about two parts of his Bill on which I should like to ask the Lord Advocate a few more questions. The theory of the Government in bringing in this Bill is that anybody who expends money upon land is to be rated in respect of that land. But there is one very remarkable exception, and that is the railway land. Why? What is the ground for it?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. THOMAS SHAW, Hawick Burghs)) said that in his reply he would be happy to give an answer on that point. The whole valuation of Scotland for half a century had proceeded on an entirely different basis of machinery as regarded railways and canals. The railway companies themselves, along with the Government thought that until this first step was taken as to a general scheme there should be no inclusion of railways.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That interruption is of a highly technical character, and does not touch the fundamental equities of the case. If the Government are going to make an arrangement by which railways will be entirely relieved from any rating except such as comes from the bare, naked value of the land upon which their lines and stations are laid, it is evident that they will absolutely ruin whole districts in Scotland, where the railway companies are, and have long been, the principal ratepayers. The Government will cause a large amount of inconvenience and suffering by such a violent revolution of our system of valuation. But if, on the other hand, the Government are not going to carry out such a violent revolution, but are going to rate railway companies in the future as going concerns, with only slight modifications of the existing system, then what becomes of the theory of prairie value and unearned increment? Why is a railway company to be treated differently from a gas company? Why should capital in the one case be regarded as a proper subject for rating, while in the other it is to be free from that imposition? I do not know which horn of the dilemma the Government will take, but I hope the right hon. Gentleman when he comes to reply will not deal with the mere technicalities of the case. I hope he will tell us whether or not there is going to be a substantial alteration in the existing system. If so, I say that he will cause infinite inconvenience and hardship in large districts in Scotland in which at the present time the railways are the principal ratepayers as is the case in large districts in England. On the other hand, if he is going to leave the railways as they are, why is this particular form of capital and this alone to be required to contribute to the rates of the district in which those undertakings are situated? I come now to agricultural land. So far as I know there has never been in any Bill an attempt to deal with the value of the land of agricultural holdings apart from the improvements upon it. The present Government, if not fearless themselves, are the humble servants of people who are fearless. But I notice with regret that they have not the logical instincts which animate those whose theories they adopt and spoil in the adoption. If there is to be a general system of spoliation in rating, at least let it be consistent and logical. The theory the Government has adopted in towns throws the whole burden of the rates upon the bare unoccupied land. Why do they not follow out that theory in dealing with agricultural land? I think the reason is that in a large part of

Scotland, if you merely consider the value of the land, apart from what has been done to the land, and if you estimate by any fair method the annual value of what has been put into the land by the owners and their predecessors, you will find that the prairie value of the land which is to bear all the rates is non-existent and a minus quantity, and you will have your whole fabric of rating upon no basis at all. The Bill says —

> "'Capital land value' means the sum which such lands may be expected to realise in the open market at the time of valuation if divested of buildings, erections, or structural improvements, and fixed or attached machinery."

But that is not a full, or anything like a full, enumeration of the capital expended on agricultural land in Scotland or England, especially in the highly-farmed districts. Under this definition, I suppose, a stone wall would be included under "erections," while a ditch would not be included. I am not quite so sure about a hedge. A field which is surrounded on one side by a wall and on three sides by hedges would not be rated in respect of that side where the wall is, but I suppose it would be rated in respect of the expenditure upon the hedges, because a hedge is hardly an erection or a building, or fixed or attached machinery. That does not seem very rational. A hedge has as good a claim to exemption as a wall, and a drain, which is certainly not an erection, has probably a better claim than either, because it is more directly associated with the increased fertility of the soil. A friend of mine, who was once a Member of this House, wrote a letter in which he contrasted the different treatment of two contiguous acres of land in a rural district, one of which was used entirely for building residential houses and appurtenances and the other for purely agricultural purposes. As I understand the matter, on the acre which was used entirely for building purposes everything expended in the way of building sewage works, water works, roads, and all the absolutely necessary additions required by building would all escape rating, and everything would go upon the so-called original value of the soil. But his neighbour, owning land of precisely the same character in plots of precisely the same size, and using the land not for residential but for agricultural purposes, would find that he was rated on the hedges and drains and water supply, and upon all he had expended to improve the quality of the soil. And then the Government tell us that they do not propose—and think it very unjust—that rates should fall upon industry. Then how about forests? Hon. Members below the gangway are fond of urging afforestation as a cure for all our social ills and as a method of bringing the people back to the soil. To plant a wood is regarded as a great social reform. Is it the intention of the Government to rate the wood? Do they propose to rate trees? I have not the least idea, and perhaps the Solicitor-General will tell me.

MR. URE: We propose to rate them.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Are trees the original property of the soil? Are they not the result of industry? Do they not require industry to plant them, preserve them, thin them, and keep them in health? The logic of the Government is really of a most extraordinary kind. Their whole scheme as to agricultural land appears to me utterly absurd. In future the valuer will have to ask himself, "What will any independent purchaser give now in the open market for this plot of land?" What does "now" mean? Does it mean when this Bill is passed, or when the public think it is going to pass, because if that is so I venture to suggest nobody will ever buy a plot of land. It will have no value at all. The Government are going to rate it at 24s. in the £ in some places, and in others at a still higher figure. What is the value of a plot of land rated at 24s. to 30s. in the £, or what will a purchaser give for an article which will cost him 4s. in the £ more than it will bring him in? Of course he is going to give nothing. Up to a recent date feu duties were among the most valuable securities in existence; thirty years' purchase was a common price, and it was given by trustees, owners of charities, and all those who desired to have what they regarded as an absolutely safe gilt-edged security. Bu- the economic speculations of the Solicitort General for Scotland and his colleagues have destroyed all that already. Who can get thirty years purchase, or twenty-five years purchase for a feu in Scotland? Who is foolish enough to pay that rate? Nobody. Since it was realised that the Government were contemplating these precious schemes I do not believe that a single feu in Scotland has been sold at twenty-five years purchase. You have absolutely destroyed the value. You have thrown into the sea, with no benefit to anybody, a large fraction of these valuable gilt-edged securities, and I think you have done a very great evil to Scotland by so doing. But you are going to do much worse with regard to unoccupied lands in towns. Let us take the case of the Merchant Company in Edinburgh, a great and ancient corporation owning large wealth, which they use for purely philanthropic and educational purposes. A large part of their property is unoccupied land in Edinburgh, or its immediate neighbourhood—I believe the number of private owners of unoccupied land in Edinburgh is extremely small. Every unoccupied acre which this unfortunate Merchant Company owns will henceforth, if this Bill and the consequential measure should be passed, be rated at 24s. or 25s. in the £. That is simply robbing the corporation. It is doing nothing else. On what principle, too, is the valuator to estimate the value or the owner to return it? Evidently the whole of this unoccupied land will undergo a complete revolution if this Bill is passed, and no valuator can ignore that. He would say, "If it is going to be rated at the present level its value is so and so, but if you are going to throw the whole rates of Edinburgh on it its value is *nil*." If that be true, does it not condemn the Bill absolutely? Here you have a measure which does not, indeed, touch existing contracts, and which, therefore, does not meet the demands of those who have supported the Bill, but which absolutely robs—there is no other words which can be used—the owner of every site in or near one of our big towns. On what system the land is to be valued, the new or the old, is one, and only one, of the problems raised by the terms of the Bill. The theory on which is based the transfer of the whole burden of urban expense from those who now bear it to those who own the land and houses is one which does not hold water. It is a theory which can be knocked into a cocked hat by a little ingenuity of argument; and the matter will, of course, be pressed in every Court, and before every tribunal, because the fortunes of the people who own the land are absolutely at stake. You cannot avoid the litigation which has already choked the efforts of Glasgow to deal with the matter on its own account. It seems to me that the Government have in this case treated Scotland as they are rather accustomed to treat it, as a kind of experimental ground on which all the wildest crotchets, all the rawest political speculations may be tried by rash and thoughtless innovators. I see nothing in the structure of this Bill—I do not refer to other Bills—to indicate that the Government have thought out the problem at all. It is avowedly only a door which is to lead to some scene beyond; the Government themselves do not know precisely what, and nobody knows precisely. The Bill itself is drawn on inconsistent lines, and the speeches in which it is defended touch very little on the real difficulties of the situation. It is clear that its framers, or, at all events, those who are driving the framers of the Bill along their course, will never be content without some revolution in our rating system which manifestly inflicts the most cruel hardship on a relatively small section of the community. I do not believe that the provisions of this Bill when thoroughly understood will be accepted in any part of Scotland except by that small section who seem to think this is going to be the beginning of that happy state of things when all land will be taken away from its owners without the payment of any compensation. As far as the agricultural interests are concerned I do not know that the result will be very serious, but when you come to urban property, it is as clear as daylight that under the guise of a mere alteration of the system of valuation you are really beginning a great revolution which can, I believe, do little good to the general body of the ratepayers, which certainly will not stimulate those social reforms of which we hear so much in speeches and see so little in Bills, but which, at the same time, will inflict a most cruel and unmerited hardship on a large part of the community which as much deserves the protection of equal laws and equal justice as any other portion of His Majesty's subjects.

MR. A. DEWAR (Edinburgh, S.) said it was a little difficult for anyone speaking on this side of that House to follow the Solicitor-General for Scotland, who in the Committee upstairs, as hon. Members on both sides would admit, rendered conspicuous service to the House of Commons. The Leader of the Opposition had assumed that the object of the Bill which was to follow this measure was to remove the burden of the whole of the rates from the bulk of the individuals in the towns, and to place it on the few landlords who were there. He thought that was a misconception of the intentions of the Government. He understood the Solicitor-General to state expressly that the proposal was to change the standard of rating from what was now the standard, namely, the houses on the land, to the land itself. The whole question, therefore, was whether it was preferable that the rating standard should be the land itself or the land with the buildings upon it. He asked the House to consider how the present system worked out. It meant a tax on a man who improved his house. It was a haphazard system. An assessor looked at a house and decided the valuation on which the owner was to be rated. The valuation was regulated very much by the size of a man's family. According to the present rule, if a man had a large house, his rates were high, and if he had a small house his rates were low. If a man required a large house for the accommodation of his family, up went his rates. He knew a place where there was a row of workmen's houses, similar in size and accommodation, and each valued at £20 a year, but one of the men, who had an addition to his family, got another room added to his house. His rates were increased in respect of that improvement. Another man who neglected his property and allowed it to fall into decay actually had his rates reduced. The present standard was bad from that point of view. It took away a man's inducement to give light and air to his children and encouraged him to neglect his property. As showing the unsatisfactory nature of the present system of rating he instanced the case of a manufacturer who provided premises where his workpeople had plenty of light and air. That man's rates were high because he provided that kind of accommodation, while his competitor across the street had low rates because his premises were not so commodious and well-equipped. The shopkeeper who built a shop to give plenty of light and air was rated high, not because he could afford it, but because he had spent money. The man in a back office was rated low, although probably he could much more afford to pay rates than the shopkeeper. He thought anyone would agree that the present system was haphazard and contrary to the best interests of the community. What difference would it make to any of these men if, instead of taking his house and land, they said they would take only his land and make that the standard? Then a man might put as many rooms on his land as he chose, and erect what shop or factory he pleased. The standard of rating would be the same. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition had overlooked that point.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman has appealed to me as though I had omitted something. Would not the system he has been advocating drive all the poor out of the wealthy quarters of a town?

MR. A. DEWAR said that was undoubtedly so, but the fact of the standard being changed would not in the least throw a burden upon different shoulders. That was his point. It would still be on the whole community. Valuable land was in the centre of the city, and it would no longer be used by the poor people, crowded together there in the most extreme way. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition said that it would probably be an expensive problem, although he did not exactly say how much it would cost. That argument was based on the theory that a skilled valuer would value every house and that he would be paid the ordinary fees. He agreed that in that case it would be expensive, but he thought the right hon. Gentleman had overlooked the fact that they in Scotland had skilled assessors, who did their work admirably and gave absolute satisfaction. The work they did at present was quite as difficult as that they would have to do under this Bill. Two of the most skilful and experienced of those assessors gave evidence before the Committee. One of them said it would probably cost £4,000 a year to do the whole of Scotland for the first time. He had reason to believe that the valuation of Edinburgh, with a rateable value of £300,000 odd a year, would cost under £3,000 for the first time, and, as hon. Members knew, the first time was most costly. They had some corroboration from new countries. A Blue-book was presented to the House last week for Australia and New Zealand, and it showed that the whole of South Australia was valued in a few months from one centre without any organisation, such as they had in Scotland, of assessors. The House would be surprised to learn that it was estimated that the cost would not exceed £5,000 a year. Surely if Australia could do it for £5,000 a year Scotland could do it, as the Solicitor-General said, at a reasonable sum. The taxation of land values had been enforced in New Zealand now for several years. In reply to Lord Elgin, who telegraphed asking them for information with regard to the effect of the taxation of land values in various provinces, the Governments of both Australia and New Zealand reported that it had added to the solid prosperity of the country. Out of fifty-two districts in New Zealand which had adopted the taxation of land values, two only did not approve of it or gave a qualified approval, others from time to time had expressed cordial approval of it, and several said that they had not yet had time to form an opinion; not one had gone back to the old system, although they had the option. The hon. Member for Ayr Burghs had indicated that it was a simple matter in New Zealand, as though he was talking of a dreary and desert island with only one man on it; whereas Wellington, the largest town in New Zealand, had 58,552 inhabitants. It was no answer to say that the countries were dissimilar. They should be told in what respects they were dissimilar. New Zealand was a new country and had fewer people it was true, but the economic conditions which regulated life there were precisely the same. There was another point. He would give an instance within his own personal knowledge. Similar instances would be within the knowledge of every Member of the House. Twenty-five years ago two fields in the city of Edinburgh, absolately unbuilt upon, had a rent roll of £450 per annum. Now they had a rent-roll of £12,500 per annum. The capitalised value of the fields at thirty years purchase would have been about £13,000, its value to-day at thirty years purchase was over £300,000. That enhanced value was due to the energy and enterprise of the community. Was it unreasonable to provide machinery to tap sources of wealth of that kind? They might depend upon it that in the next thirty years other fields would be subject to precisely the same condition. He supported the Bill for two reasons: first, because to take the rates off buildings would encourage men to build, and secondly, because to put them on land would tax unearned increment, some of which ought to come back to the community.

*MR. J. M. HENDERSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) said that what seemed to have vexed his hon. friend was that somebody had increased the value of his land from £400 to £12,500, but supposing he remained the owner of it he would have to pay taxes on that increased amount. Then as to, the other point raised about New Zealand the prosperity of the towns was not attributable to this tax, and indeed hon. Members would forgive him for saying that nothing in the nature of prosperity was attributable to any tax. In other words taxes could not give prosperity. What brought prosperity to New Zealand was the frozen meat trade. Several people used to attribute the stopping of garrotting to flogging, but garrotting had stopped long before flogging was resorted to. People were very apt to attribute an effect to a cause which had ceased to operate. The enormous prosperity of New Zealand must be attributed to the improved refrigerating machinery on ships enabling meat to be brought to this and other countries. As to the Report which had been referred to, it was written by the very gentlemen who were justifying their existence, the assessors. Surely it was impossible to say that that was evidence which they could accept or to suggest that they should go to America or New Zealand, which were Protectionist countries ,and take their policy from them. The argument was one which was not legitimate and was very far-fetched. This Bill was introduced on the recommendation of a Select Committee, and before he joined this House he always thought that a Select Committee was a Committee selected of open-minded men who would bring judicial minds to bear upon the evidence submitted to them, and according to that state of mind they would weigh the evidence submitted to them and so give their Report to the House. Since he had joined the House, however, he had learned something very different. This Committee consisted of fifteen members, one of whom retired and took no part in the proceedings. That reduced the number to fourteen, and of that fourteen eight were pledged up to their very eyes in support of this principle. Three of these included his hon. friend the Solicitor-General for Scotland, and the hon. Member for South Edinburgh, both of whom are honorary vice-presidents of the League for the Taxation of Land Values. That league was promoted for the promulgation of the doctrine of Henry George, that—

> "It is not necessary to confiscate land it is only necessary to confiscate rent. Let the individuals who now hold it, still retain, if they want to, possession of what they are pleased to call their land. Let them buy and sell and bequeath and devise it. We may safely leave them the shell if we take the kernel."

What this Bill therefore was going to lead up to was nothing less than the carrying out of that doctrine of Henry George. Before that Committee they had the evidence of the best surveyors and assessors from Edinburgh and Glasgow and from all over Scotland—men of the highest eminence, who gave them the most important evidence. He was bound to say that the whole weight of that evidence was against this principle, but the whole of it was brushed aside, and he assured the House that the Report was a condensed form of the evidence which was given by the present president, the late president and another ex-president of this very league. He was very sorry to say it, but there was a great deal of ignorance throughout the country on this question, and some of the leading Liberal papers had largely contributed to that ignorance. Some of the literature which had been sent through the country by means of tracts also was most misleading. The object of the foolish piece of legislation which was foreshadowed by this Bill was to strike off the buildings from the sites and relieve them from rates, but they could not get away from buildings in estimating any site value. It was imposible. The picture his hon. friend drew of a man being able to put up as much building as he liked and not pay rates was ridiculous and it would be iniquitous. Supposing a man had a house with two storeys and paid rates on £100 a year. Were they going to allow his neighbour to build twenty storeys and still pay on £100 a year also? If the two storeys accommodated twenty people and the twenty storeys 200, were they going to give water, sewage arrangements, street lighting, police and other amenities to the 180 people for nothing? According to that principle, three-fourths of the people would be enjoying these municipal amenities for nothing. Was such a proposal to be defended for a moment? Let them suppose that there were six houses in a street which were all, say, two storeys high, that the assessor came along and fixed the site value of these houses at £100; and that one of the owners built his house up to four storeys. Was the assessor to come next year and say to the other five people, "You have not made the best use you could of your site as you have not built four storeys, and you must pay the same rate as the four-storeyed house which I have now valued at £200?" In New York they were building twenty-four storeys high. He was glad that the Prime Minister had been so wise as to throw over the Solicitor-General for Scotland in regard to feu duties. He did not think it much mattered who paid the rates, so long as rent was the guiding factor in regard to rating. He should be glad to see the owners pay all the rates, as they did in a large proportion of cases in the City of London. ["Oh!"] Well, that was a fact, and was according to the evidence before the Committee. If a man wanted an office in the City he understood that usually the owners paid the rates and included it in the rent. If it was an unpopular district the tenant got a cheaper rent, and by that means the owner paid the rates. He was quite content that the owner should pay the rates. The difficulty arose when they proceeded to deal with the outlying property. Let him take as an illustration the town of Aberdeen. The Committee had a Return carefully prepared by the City Assessor, the Parish Assessor, the Town Clerk and several others who took a great interest in this subject. That Return showed that the total rateable value of Aberdeen was £750,000, and the estimate of the land value £107,000. So that the whole of the land value would only amount to half the present rates, which were over £200,000 a year, and therefore the rates could not be paid out of the land values. But he understood from the hon. Member for South Edinburgh that there was to be an additional rate on the buildings. If that was so, then that was exactly the ground on which the Glasgow Bill was thrown out. They (the Committee) objected to a double standard. The estimated land values in Aberdeen were £107,000 a year, the rates were over £200,000, and the other £100,000 must be obtained from the buildings. Therefore they broke their principle of a single standard. It was said that the balance would be obtained from the unbuilt-upon land. Let them observe what would be done in every town when they came to deal with the figures. The unbuilt-upon land in Aberdeen was taken at 3,340 acres, and all this land was assumed to be nearly ripe for building purposes. The town of Aberdeen only covered 1,685 acres, so far as the buildings were concerned, and it had taken several hundred years to do that. The meaning of these calculations was that if it were assumed that all this land was ready for building upon to-day the land value of it was £50,000. But that still left £50,000 short of the amount of the rates. What did that mean? There was this danger. An assessor would go to one of these men and say: "You have an acre of land. I propose to value it at £1,500, that is equal to £60 a year." The man might say: "But I am only getting £3 a year for it." To which the assessor would reply: "I cannot help that. Somebody will give you £1,500 for it." Who was to be the judge in a matter like that? The Solicitor-General spoke of a building zone. He did not know what that might be. And no one would buy 500 acres surrounding a town to build upon immediately. The most speculative builder in Aberdeen, if anybody went to him and offered him 500 acres at £500 an acre, provided he at once covered them with buildings, would decline. He would be ruined if he accepted. What would be the result of an extension of this sort in Glasgow? The gentleman whose land would be operated upon at the end of this twentieth century would have to pay the rates upon it now, that was, double, treble, or quadruple the actual rent he was receiving. A good deal had been said of the expense of it; but this matter had been brought forward by the Scottish Municipalities. Some of them had been very keen about it, let them pay for it. He was sure when the truth came out it would demonstrate the folly of the whole thing, unless the full principles of Henry George were adopted. How would it affect the land values? Was it a wise thing to attack property so as to reduce its value? One of the objects of the Bill, as stated in the Report, was to settle the housing question. One of the economic advantages was—

> "that houses and their improvements would be relieved from rates, which would encourage building and facilitate industrial developments."

One of the points taken by the hon. Member for South Edinburgh was that directly a man began to add to his house his rates increased. The 1854 Act did not say a word about taxing buildings. What it did was to tax rents, and it was right that it should. If he had a house at £100 a year, and his neighbour had a house at £120 with two rooms more, and he built two more rooms to his house, he would have a house with the same accommodation as his neighbour. Then why should he pay rates on £100 only and his neighbour on £120? The test was what rent the house would produce, and the reason for that was that the larger the house was the greater the number living in it, who got the benefit of police protection and other matters on which the rates were spent. The right hon. Member the Leader of the Opposition made a reference to Sub-section (2), which provided that this valuation was not to affect railways and canals. The right hon. Gentleman could not find a reason for that. The reason was that when this principle of site values was being discussed in Committee, they ran against the dead wall of railways and canals, because they had no values as building land. The companies were under obligations to use the land for the purpose of the railways and canals, and therefore it could have no site values. But the Committee said that would not do. It was the money they wanted, and the principle must go. But that was no kindness to the railways, because if railways were rated on the present principle it might mean that the percentage in the £ would be doubled, and instead of paying, say, 6s. in the £ as they did now they would pay 12s. on the same assessment, and he did not think any railway company in the country could stand it. The principle was all right so long as money was obtained by adopting it, but as soon as the principle ceased to provide money the principle was abandoned, and they stood on the old method of assessment. They had witnesses before the Committee from Glasgow, who were asked how much of a workman's rent was paid to the ground landlord, but they had never taken the trouble to work it out. The Committee worked it out, and it came to 15s. a year at most. Was it to be contended that if people were forced to give builders a bargain, for that was what it came to, which enabled the tenant to pay 7s. 6d. a year instead of 15s., they were going to settle the housing question for the other 7s. 6d. a year? What about the housing question? For the rich and middle classes there was no housing question. Mr. Harper, the statistical officer of the County Council, admitted that there were houses by the hundred in every suburb of London which could be bought for less than the mortgage money. In Dulwich, Norwood, and other suburbs, houses of £20, £50, £70, and £100 rental could be bought for less than the mortgage money, which was usually two-thirds or three-fourths of the value, and the other fourth might be written off for ground value. Mr. Harper also admitted that there was land in any quantity in Poplar and in other districts that might be had. Sir Samuel Montagu had offered to the London County Council 25 acres for nothing on which to build workmen's dwellings, and the County Council had refused the offer. The reason of overcrowding was insufficiency of income among the workpeople, who could not afford the rent of the houses which were built. Even if they had the ground for nothing they could not build houses which could be let at a rent which the poor class of workpeople could afford, and which would give a return to the builder. The reason of this insufficiency of income was that there were great numbers of men who did not receive regular wages; they only earned on the average from 15s. to 25s. a week, and they could not afford to pay the rent of any decent house which might be built for them. If anyone attended the police courts they would hear applications for separation and alimony by this very class of workpeople. The Legislature years ago gave the magistrates power to grant separation orders, and he found that in England during the year 1904-5—he could not get the figures for 1906—the number of separation orders granted was no less than 6,750 in each of those years. That was a very serious thing. In three years, at the rate separation orders were granted, they had about 20,000 workpeople who, instead of requiring 20,000 houses, under these separation orders would require 40,000 houses to house themselves and their wives and families. [Laughter.] It was all very well to laugh. He was in the police court the other day—[laughter]—not in the dock but on the Bench—and what happened? A woman who had five children applied for arrears of separation allowance; and another woman, who made a similar application, had four children. Women in such circumstances as these were too poor to rent any houses which they could build for them, even if they got the land for nothing on which to build. It might be that some provision would have to be made to meet the needs of these people, but at any rate let them all subscribe to that work; let them not take one particular form of investment and confiscate it, but let every investment share and share alike in the burden. He observed that a good many people who favoured these proposals had their money very carefully invested in private industrial undertakings where it could not be attacked. In opposing the Second Reading of the Bill he did not feel that he was opposing the Government. He felt that the Government had got entangled with those who held the doctrines of Henry George. The Prime Minister had thrown them over on the question of the feu duties; and when they got this valuation he believed that the Prime Minister would throw the doctrine on which it proceeded over also. As a humble supporter of the Government he felt it his duty to oppose the Bill. He warned the Government that if this or any other confiscatory doctrine was coquetted with or adopted it would split the Liberal Party in a way that it had never been split before. The country would reject any such principle as that of Henry George, a principle which he was certain was at the bottom of this proposal. He could only say that he was very sorry that he should have to oppose the Bill, but he felt that it contained proposals which were a great danger to the Party, and that being so, he would oppose this first, and any further steps which he believed would lead to disaster to the Liberal Party.

*MR. WOOD (Glasgow, St. Rollox) said his hon. friend the Member for West Aberdeenshire had complained that the majority of the Committee were pledged to a particular view on this subject. But he thought it might be said of the minority of the Committee that they came equally pledged. The fact of the matter was that it was perfectly impossible to form a Committee of Members who were not pledged to a view on this matter. Hundreds of Members in that House were pledged to the taxation of land values, and he supposed hon. Members opposite were equally pledged against it. With regard to women separated from their husbands, the hon. Member said that they mostly belonged to the working classes. He did not think they did out of due proportion.

MR. J. M. HENDERSON: I omitted to state that the Home Secretary gave me a return of the orders made in the Probate Court, and the figures were twenty-two and twenty-five for 1904 and 1905, respectively. ["What about the divorce cases?"]

*MR. WOOD said that undoubtedly many thousands of the working classes could not obtain the house-room they required. Those who advocated the taxation of land values thought it was a reform which would do something to remedy the existing condition of things. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition had described the proposal of the Government as robbery; he had assumed that they were going to change the whole incidence of rating at a single operation and without any regard for existing contracts, and then drew strange conclusions from that assumption. He did not think the assumption was at all borne out by any language used by the Prime Minister or any Member of the Government. The conclusion at which the Leader of the Opposition had arrived was that the rate on the land would be 24s. in the £, and that therefore the landlord would pay away the whole of his rent and another 4s. in the £. As one with a little practical experience of rating, it seemed to him that if, as the right hon. Gentleman assumed, they reduced the value of the land to nothing at all, then even a rate of 24s. in the £. would produce nothing. This question of the taxation of land values was closely bound up with the housing question. It was represented as a mere measure for taking away from the present occupying ratepayer the burden which he bore, and placing it on someone else; that was not so much their object as that by altering the basis of rating they should relieve industry and assist commerce by lightening the burden upon building and improvements. That question had been adequately dealt with, and he would confine his remarks to the question of housing. He did not think they could more radically touch the housing question than by this reform. The hon. Member for West Aberdeenshire had referred to an experience of the London County Council. On one occasion a well-known and respected Member of that House offered them some land for housing purposes, for nothing. Of course, the land had value, no doubt considerable value, and it was offered to them for nothing to build workmen's houses upon. His hon. friend the Member for West Aberdeenshire seemed to think that their refusal of the offer told in favour of his case, whereas it told in favour of the case for the other side. They could have erected buildings on the land and let them at reasonable rents, and made it a profitable speculation both to the ratepayers and the occupiers of the houses; but when they took into account the fact that the rates were about 8s. or 9s. in the £, and that they had to be paid, not on the value of the land only, but on the composite subject—the buildings and the land, they found that the burden was such as to prevent their building on the ground. It was obvious that the land upon which building must take place for the working-classes must be the cheaper land. It had been said that the effect of this reform would be to drive the working classes out of the neighbourhoods where the land was costly. That process was now going on in some parts of London, where warehouses were taking the place of dwellings, whilst in other parts the population were being displaced by the erection of large banks and insurance offices. This Bill would provide in such cases other land to which the working classes could go to obtain houses at reasonable rents when they were driven out of the central parts of large towns. If they could by degrees and with due regard to justice and equity alter the basis of rating from the composite subject to the land, they would be able to get building land on the outskirts of towns where workmen's dwellings might be erected at a cheap rate. The London County Council had been criticised for not building houses for the lowest and poorest class of the population. As a matter of fact, they could not do that without charity rents, but they would be assisted to do so if the proposed reform were carried. Some hon. Members seemed to be proceeding on the assumption that this Bill was going to do something which was utterly absurd. The hon. Member for West Aberdeenshire seemed to have fallen into that error. All they desired was to know what the value of the land was before a scheme was formulated and placed before the House. He happened to be a Member of the Committee which dealt with the Scottish Bill, and they had had widely different estimates given as to the value of the land. One witness said that the annual value of the land in Glasgow was a little over half a million, the figure given being £577,000, but the assessor for Glasgow put it at nearly £2,500,000. This Bill had been represented as a predatory proposal, but he believed it was one which would bring about very considerable economic results. It was not merely a question of shifting the incidence of rating, but of shifting the burden of rating from the objects of industry and from what was a vital necessity of the people, namely, houseroom, to the basis of the land. It had been the favourite argument of hon. Gentlemen opposite that whatever burdens were placed upon the rates ultimately fell upon the land. He was not prepared to accept that argument without qualification, but undoubtedly there was some truth in it, because if there were no rates the landlord would obtain a much larger rent for his land. How did that agree with the arguments put forward to-day? Hon. Members opposite sometimes used the argument that it was no use to tax ground values because the burden would be shifted, but occasionally they would argue that it was unfair to tax the land because it was a new subject of taxation and would be making people pay who had never paid before. The burden did to a large extent fall on the land, but it fell unequally and unfairly, and it would be an enormous advantage if it fell more equally. The occupying ratepayers did not appear to feel the burden of taxes so acutely as they felt the burden of the rates.

They imagined that if rates were relieved by doles from the taxes that they were the gainers. This reform would bring about clearness of vision on the part of the electors, and that was a most desirable thing. He hoped they would get this Bill for Scotland, and then they would be able to discover the real value of the land.

*MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs) said he was afraid that his experience of rating in towns was somewhat out of date, because it was many years since he served on the Small Holdings Committee. That Committee, however, gave him an opportunity of forming certain conclusions, and they were quite in harmony with the proposals of this Bill. He thought it was necessary to have a separate valuation for urban houses and land, and it was quite feasible to provide for that separate valuation. The question of the cost had been raised, but he did not think the expense thrown upon the occupiers would be very heavy, and the returns could very easily be made. A good deal of work might be thrown upon the assessors, and in view of the novel character of the new form of taxation there might be considerable litigation. He thought under the circumstances that a grant in aid of costs should be given. The town council in his constituency had asked that three years should be allowed to elapse after the passing of the Bill before it came into operation. Nothing could be simpler than the proposal of this Bill. It did not provide for the carrying out of the scheme of Henry George, but it was a Bill to clear the way for rating land separately from houses. His opinion was that there should be a higher tax upon land than upon houses, because the rental of land was a net rental. He had always felt that unoccupied building land ought to bear a fair proportion of local taxation. To his mind that was one of the strongest reasons for making progress with this Bill. He was not a man holding extreme views in regard to the land question, but so far from thinking this an extravagant proposal he had himself brought in a Bill under which local authorities would have been able to place a valuation upon all building land within their areas and under which at any subsequent period they might take over the land at that valuation plus anything done by the owners to increase its value. He thought local authorities ought to own the whole of the land values created through the increase of the population. He could not understand from the legal phraseology used by the Solicitor-General whether there was any difference between him and the Lord-Advocate as to the placing of taxation on existing contracts. Much built-on land had changed hands so often that it would not be possible to put the ordinary incidence of local taxation on the existing contracts without doing an injustice and raising an amount of opposition which would be fatal to the progress of any legislation of this kind. As regarded urban land, he saw no difficulty whatever in the working of this proposal, nor did he see any difficulty in the way of gradually building up a system of local taxation much fairer in its incidence than that which they had to-day. He had even suggested that a small tax should be put on existing feu duties on the ground that municipal expenditure tended to run up the value of those duties. Feu duties, however, had not been rising in value of late. He doubted very much whether much change could be made in applying the Bill to the landward districts. The whole value of arable land really consisted in the capital expended on it, and if that was not rated, he did not quite see what was to be. There were many parishes where but for the buildings, fixtures, and equipment on the land there would be little left to rate at all. He was sorry that the Report of the joint Secretaries of the Treasury had not received more consideration in this discussion. He had taken part in inquiries himself and he had followed closely what had been done by others, and he looked upon the Report of the joint Secretaries as by far the most stable foundation on which to build. If the Government went upon the lines laid down in that Report there would not be much wrong in their policy. The pressure of the rates was so great that, if they found a subject such as unoccupied building land to which the community had given the whole of its value, it could surely not be expected that that subject should continue to escape local taxation as it had done up to now. The great justification of this Bill and of the further legislation which was contemplated was that it would remedy the unfair incidence of existing taxation. The Bill did not by any means cover the whole of the urban land question, but it gave a basis which for dealing with the reform of local taxation was essential to all parties, and he warmly welcomed it, but, like every other Member, he retained his liberty to discuss the details of any new methods which might be proposed.

*MR. BARRIE (Londonderry, N.) said he wished to remind the House of the change which had taken place since the Bill was introduced. There was when the Bill was introduced opposition from every quarter of Scotland, chiefly, or at least largely, because of the direct attack it was making on existing feu duties. It was not for him to comment at length on the explanations offered by the Solicitor-General for Scotland of the change of policy on the part of the Government in that matter, or to inquire how far the hon. and learned Gentleman remained in agreement with, or continued to differ from, the Lord-Advocate. In the opinion of those best able to judge, the proposal made by the Solicitor-General in the Committee, and carried by a bare majority, was not approved by any volume of public opinion in Scotland. Therefore many Members of the House were distinctly relieved when they found the Prime Minister, wisely interpreting the signs of the times, and seeing that the opposition to the proposal was going to be overwhelming, gave an assurance that the proposed attack on existing feu duties was not to be proceeded with. He acknowledged the earnest, faithful, and fair-minded manner in which the Solicitor-General had discharged his duties as chairman of the Committee, and if he and others on his side of the House attacked the line which the Report took, they did not in the slightest degree wish to minimise the skill and courtesy with which the hon. and learned Gentleman had discharged the duty laid upon him by the Government. The movement which had led up to the measure now before the House originated in the doctrine promulgated by the late Henry George, who was the first to preach it in Scotland, after he had—with little or no success—preached it in America. After Henry George had preached his new gospel of restoring the land to the people, a number of associations were formed to promote reforms in land tenure and local taxation, and he thought he was correct in saying that several of those who now sat on the Treasury Bench had been actively associated with, and had publicly supported, the views of the Scottish Association for the Taxation of Land Values. The corporation of Glasgow had started an active propaganda in favour of those views. Why were they so active in supporting them? It was because of the constantly increasing taxation, and the necessity for finding relief in some new form of revenue. That desire to find a new source of revenue was, he thought, the key to the whole of the agitation which followed. It was not a redistribution of the burden on a more equitable basis that was called for; the doctrine preached was that the land was escaping its fair share of taxation. It was undoubtedly an attractive doctrine. "Unearned increment" and "betterment" were nice-sounding titles which were attractive, and needy corporations, advanced socialists, and municipal traders joined hands. The owners of sites were numerically a small body, and it was easy to mark them down for prey and to make them the scapegoats of this special legislation. At a very early stage the corporation of Glasgow adopted, by a majority of one, a Bill on the lines of the measure of last session. That corporation in its enthusiasm sent missionaries all over the country preaching the new doctrine. About £2,500 of public funds were expended in exploiting it, and so far as he could gather from the public prints, the English and Scottish corporations who had associated themselves in the work had been remarkably slow in paying their quota of the expenditure. It had now been declared to be an illegal expenditure, and it would be interesting to see whether they did pay or not. The ratepayers of Glasgow had a special interest in this subject, because a large proportion of them were, and had been, strongly against the propaganda to which he referred. The views held by certain members of the Glasgow Corporation were of the most extraordinary character. Ex-Bailie Burt, one of the most active members of the Scottish Association for the Taxation of Land Values, gave evidence before the Royal Commission on Local Taxation. He would read the following extract from that gentleman's evidence :—

"Q.—But all I understand this proposal is put before us to do is to shift the burden of rating from one class of owner to another ?

"A.—The proposal starts with altering the basis of taxation in relation to rentals; that is, instead of being, as at present, on the annual rent they receive from the tenant, they shall pay upon the annual value of the ground; that is the beginning of the principle, or foundation of the principle, for altering the incidence of taxation altogether.

"Q.—What is to be the next step?

"A.—Increase the tax upon the value of the ground.

"Q.—Until you take it all ?

"A.—Until you take 20s. in the £."

He would read to the House the examination of Bailie John Ferguson, also an eloquent exponent of this new gospel :—

"Q.—What is your proposal as regards the rating of this valuation of the site ?

"A. — Having separated the sites or ground and houses, as by a motion which we have carried in the Glasgow Corporation to have a Bill formulated to present to Parliament; having separated the house value from the land value, we would shift the burden of the local taxation upon the site value, beginning with a certain amount.

"Q.—All local taxation, or the owner's share of it only ?

"A.—We would put all local taxation on site values, and set everything free that is the product of individual labour and capital from taxation.

"Q.—At present, I understand, you would put upon that the whole of the rating of Glasgow, owner and occupier ?

"A.—£600,000; the municipal rates of the city of Glasgow.

"Q.—Both on owner and occupier ?

"A.—Both. We would take the whole £600,000, not necessarily in a rapid method, but by a transition method.

"Q.—What do you mean by not necessarily in a rapid way ?

"A.—Supposing you were to put 2s. in the £, or a tax not exceeding that, upon the whole land values of the city of Glasgow—that is to say, £2,000,000 sterling—that would give us a certain sum.

"Q.—But you do not limit your demand upon this fund to either £200,000 or £400,000 a year ?

"A.—No.

"Q.—If the voters in Glasgow desire it, would you think it right to take the whole of the £2,000000 ?

"A.—Yes. Except that the Imperial Taxes have to be considered, and the Imperial Government has a right to a portion."

That, they would understand, was the advocacy—confined, he thought, to this witness—of quite a new aspect of this matter. Questions by members of the Royal Commission addressed to witnesses as regarded the equity of this course were followed by reluctant admission of the Imperial claim, but the witnesses last Session before the Select Committee did not agree in that suggestion. His last extract was a brief one. It was from the examination of Lord Provost Chisholm, now Sir Samuel Chisholm :—

"Q. —Mr. Ferguson, whom you know, told me quite candidly that he would go the length of 20s. in the £. Would you agree ?

"A. — It all depends upon how that is to be interpreted. I recognise that land values belong to the community. But if any one were to propose that the moment this schedule is adopted as the basis of valuation and of taxation we should then rate land values at 10s., 15s., or 20s. per £, I could not on any consideration agree to it, because I would regard it as what your Lordship has said—as revolutionary—and I think it would be attended with so much hardship and suffering that it would be unwise or wrong to propose it. But recognising, as I do, that land values belong to the community, I would be quite prepared to see a very slow advance in the amount of rating chargeable to the land values, though it should be only at the rate of addition of 1 per cent. per annum.

"Q. — But, like Mr. Ferguson, you look ultimately to getting the whole 20s. ?

"A.—I recognise the land values as the creation of the community.

"Q.—I think I am right in the view that your final object is that the land in every town should belong to the public authority of that town ?

"A.—Yes, you may put it that way."

All these witnesses of whom he had spoken were estimable gentlemen in their private capacity, but they had clearly had a distorted vision as regarded the question of land values and the appropriation of the whole value of the soil. The late Sir James Warwick, Town Clerk of Glasgow, advised against the legality of the Corporation expending funds in exploiting this scheme. Since then, as he had already mentioned, a considerable sum having been spent, this opinion had been forced upon the Corporation, and he was glad to note, even at this late date, that that expenditure had now finally ceased. He was also glad to think that there was evidence that the Glasgow Corporation had begun to take a saner view upon this important subject, and that there was also a growing indication amongst that body of a desire to reconsider their attitude towards what had long been looked upon as one of the best and safest forms of investment in Scotland. They had had different illustrations that afternoon as to how this clause might work out, and others must be within the knowledge of every member who had taken the trouble to dip into the Blue-book giving the work of that Committee. But he would take an illustration of two prominent buildings close together in Glasgow on opposite sides of St. Vincent Street. There was the Western Club, which occupied 1,295 square yards of land. The site and building were valued by the assessor of Glasgow at £2,500 per annum, which equalled £15 10s. per square yard. They crossed the street, and they had there the National Bank building, occupying 1,218 square yards, the site and building being annually assessed at £6,011, equal to £65 per yard. Now, what he would like to suggest to the House was, if the legislation of which this was a preliminary were passed into law, how could any assessor declare what would be the true value of either the one side or the other of these sites? They had other cases equally remarkable brought before the Select Committee. The Lord Advocate would find in the Blue-book numerous and striking illustrations. On the corner of a certain street they found one comparatively modern building yielding four times per square yard what another did. He pressed, in examination, the Glasgow assessor—one of the fairest witnesses they had before them, although they might disagree with his views, but he gave his evidence in the most frank and straightforward manner—he pressed him as regarded these illustrations, but all the Committee could get from him was that he would be reasonable under such circumstances, and he thought he added that he would accept the prices paid for each for valuation purposes. The matter at issue, however, was far too important to be left to what might be the reasonable interpretation of any individual assessor. The views of the promoters could not be called either moderate or reasonable. When they came to dealing with such amazing differences as had cropped up they would see how involved and difficult the subject was, and the immense trouble and worry and litigation any such measure would lead to. He had already said how fair he considered the evidence of the Glasgow assessor, and yet he told them that he believed that the increment should belong to the assessing body, the Corporation, not to the persons or company who improved the fabric! In answer to that he thought every Member who knew the West of Scotland would bear in mind the striking illustration supplied in Clydebank. Before the great Singer Company went down to Clydebank it was purely a farming district. They, a little ahead of others, went there and purchased a large slice of the countryside, and he thought it was a matter of world-wide knowledge how they had developed their industry there, and given large employment and brought much prosperity to what was now a flourishing township. Under the measure which they believed this Bill led up to, they would be penalising the Singer Company for their early enterprise. They would be assessing them on the present value to which they had so directly and so largely contributed, rather than on the value which they originally paid for the land and which they had developed, bringing the community to the land. They had heard a great deal about the principle of betterment, but was there not also a principle of worsement in these matters? Until he studied this question in Committee he was under the impression that the cost of land surrounding all our great cities was perhaps slowly in some cases but continuously going up, and he was considerably surprised when a statement was put in by one of the most influential witnesses who came before them, Mr. Birnie, of Glasgow, showing how altogether erroneous that view was. The information that statement disclosed was, he thought, of such importance that he must ask the House to allow him to make a brief reference to it. Mr. Birnie handed in a list of eleven estates, large estates all convenient to the centre of the city—he did not think any of them was more than four miles from the centre of the city—and in every case it was brought out that there had been a sharp fall in value during the last twenty-five years, rather than an increase. On the Govanhill Estate between 1875 and 1877 from 20s. to 27s. per square yard was obtained; in 1899 feuing took place at 14s.; in 1901 14,700 yards were feued as low as 12s. Then there was the Hillington Estate. In 1877 it was sold for £21,829 for 29 acres, and in 1905 it was re-sold for £10,000. On the Scotstoun Estate in 1877 15 acres were feued at 9s. per yard; in 1897 it was refeued at prices averaging 6s. 4d. per yard; and in 1904 another part was refeued at 6s. per yard. He might go on with the list which throughout showed a substantial fall, but he did not wish to make an unreasonable demand upon the House. Another matter was brought before them, equally important, viz., that at the close of last year there was unlet property in Glasgow to the annual value of £307,000. He thought that legislation on these lines was detrimental to the object which the professed friends of all such legislation had in view. They carefully analysed in Committee at how much a reduction, even of 25 per cent., on the value of land would work out when they considered the rent at which the houses could be let to working men, and the value of the land when they were dealing with tenants was so small compared with the value of the fabric that it was found that 3d. per week was the very greatest difference that that would make. Reference had been made that afternoon to the effect which even the suggestion of legislation on the lines of the Report of that Committee had had in Scotland. He was bound to support the Leader of the Opposition as to the effect which that Report had on feu duties in Scotland. They had hitherto been regarded as gilt-edged securities, but immediately on the publication of the Report, coupled with the want of confidence in the Government, large blocks of feu duties had been taken off the market as there was no free and open market for them until people knew how far the Government were going. Relief followed immediately upon the declaration of the Prime Minister. The Lord Advocate declared this to be an uncontroversial Bill; he was alone in that opinion, for unless there was something behind it, some intention to go further, there would be no necessity to trespass upon the time of the House with such a measure.

MR. C. E. PRICE (Edinburgh, Central) expressed regret that this measure was not introduced before the last measure dealing with land in Scotland. If it had been, it would have been passed in a very short time. He thought the land should bear the burdens of the State instead of commercial industry, energy, and enterprise bearing the burdens of the land. He, therefore, welcomed the Bill, because he believed it would have the effect of forcing land into the market and make it bear a fair share of the burdens that were now cast upon the industry and the enterprise of the community. The ex-Prime Minister had said that the Edinburgh Merchant Corporation was a wealthy body which spent its money upon beneficent objects, but how did it come by its wealth? By putting its money in land round Edinburgh, and he said that for these few people to derive the benefit of the increased value of the land was morally wrong.

MR. R. DUNCAN (Lanarkshire, Govan) asked whether that remark would apply to a Friendly Society.

MR. C. E. PRICE said it would apply to anybody, because it affected the whole community if land lying round towns passed into the hands of a few individuals. This Merchant Company held land in a district in which his firm took a feu. The price was formerly a £40 feu, but when the firm with which he was connected took it it was £60. The Merchant Company had done nothing to increase the value of that feu by £20, but still his firm took it at £60 an acre, and the Company got the benefit. The moment they took that feu, the land on the other side of the street was advanced to £120 and other land in the neighbourhood advanced to £200. The value of the land increased from the fact that his firm put a factory there and employed a large number of workers, and thus the increased price of the land had come about through the energy of people like his firm. He would show how that worked out. Having erected a factory, they went through the sad experience of having it burned down, and they then made up their minds that, so far as it could be done, the place should be rebuilt in such a way and be of such a nature that the whole place could not be burned down. They, therefore, took every precaution, division doors were erected and every appliance was used to prevent such a catastrophe. When they had done that the Factory Inspector for Scotland congratulated them upon the erection of such a building, but the assessor inquired what money they had spent and they were practically fined in the way of rates for their own virtue. They said that that was absolutely wrong, and it was because they wanted to alter that system that this Bill was brought in. Lying alongside them was vacant land which was being "held up" until someone wanted it. How was that rated? At practically agricultural value. They said that was wrong after their experience in taking the land and building a factory and also rebuilding it. This case illustrated the iniquity of the present system, and it was because they wanted to alter it that this Bill was brought in. In Edinburgh a friend of his the other day purchased for £21,000 property which changed hands twenty years ago for £3,000. In another case, land which had been worth £26,000 was sold for £62,000. This increase in value had been brought about by the whole community, who should have the benefit of it. As to the question of feu duties, he was exceedingly sorry that the Prime Minister had departed from the recommendations of the Report of that Committee which dealt with the value of them. What security had they for those feu duties? Nothing but the good government of the place by the community, and if they excluded feu duties from this Bill it would create great confusion in the future. The great basis of all taxation of land was value, and these people were getting from the community what was their value. He thought, however, the Bill would work a revolution in Scotland, and on this ground he gave it his hearty support.

MR. HART-DAVIES (Hackney, N.) wished to relate to the House a personal experience as to how land was dealt with in Canada. Some years ago he was inspired by the example of the great London landlords, such as the Duke of Westminster and the Earl of Cadogan and Mr. Astor. He bought land in Canada on the outskirts of a city, hoping that other people would make the land valuable for him—a thing one could do in England with absolute ease—but after a time he found he had entered on an extremely losing speculation. That was owing to the separate land valuation from year to year and the heavy taxation he had to pay upon it. On representing to one of the local officials that he had been rather hardly dealt with, he was told, "You are exactly the kind of man we want to get rid of; you are checking the development of the city by holding the land for purely personal motives." He arrived at the conclusion that the official was right. That was in his unregenerate days before he became a land reformer, but he got the value of his money in the moral teaching which he received. They on that side felt that when land was a monopoly and when other people than those who owned it made the value of it, it was only fair that those who made the value should have the benefit of it and that it should go to a community. This system was in vogue all over America, New Zealand, and Canada. It was a perfectly cheap process and he thought it could be carried out here. That was why he was strongly in favour of this Valuation Bill for Scotland, and he only hoped that in a short time they should have a similar Bill for England.

MR. RICHARDSON (Nottingham, S.), speaking on behalf of the Labour Party, supported the Bill, in the first place, because, they had been told by the Solicitor-General for Scotland that the measure was the forerunner of another measure in which they were interested, and, in the second place, because he believed that when the measure was passed it would be a pattern on which a like measure would be based in the interests of this country. It had been said during the debate that whatever the intention of the framers of the laws relating to the incidence of rating, as a matter of fact rates were levied on the rental value of buildings, whether they were dwelling houses, factories, or workshops. Seeing that the occupiers of these places—in the main workshops and factories—were chiefly those who did the work of the country, the rates were levied not upon the landlords but upon industry. According to the statement of Lord Justice Fletcher Moulton, who was one of the very greatest authorities on this question, half the rates levied in our large cities and towns were spent on new streets, parks, and the like, all of which benefited financially one class, namely, the landlords who did not work, while all this expense came out of the pockets of those who did the whole of the work, namely, the workmen. The landlord as such did not contribute anything towards the rate, and the tenant or the worker found the whole of the rate. The direct result of spending half the rates in public improvement was that the landlord immediately raised the rent. In his own city a few years ago the district rate was increased for the purposes of education, and circulars were sent out to the occupiers of industrial dwellings by house agents, stating that on account of this increase the rent of their houses would be increased by 6d. a week. He took it that the Bill was in the main intended to relieve the industrial classes and place the burden upon the shoulders of those who not only were best able to bear it but had not done a handstroke except as members of the community to increase the value of the land on which the property was built. If they taxed occupied land inside a borough area they made it produce more wealth, but if they taxed industry they handicapped industry. Therefore in the interests of the whole community he believed that unoccupied lands in large cities and towns should be taxed. For these reasons he would have pleasure in supporting the Bill.

*MR. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.) said he had listened very carefully to the arguments advanced in support of the Amendment and in his opinion they had largely added to the strength of the arguments adduced by the supporters of the Bill as to the necessity for its being passed. The Leader of the Opposition was a student of economy but he must have laid aside John Stuart Mill before he made the speech which he had delivered that afternoon. The right hon. Gentleman had evidently not made himself acquainted with the facts of the case, otherwise he would not have committed himself to the statement that all the steam would be taken out of the agitation for the taxation of land values if feu duties were taken out of it. All who had given the slightest study to the taxation of land values must realise that the taxation of feu duties was only a fringe of the question. The right hon. Gentleman said his friends who had moved and seconded the rejection of this Bill had based themselves on the highest authority in Scotland with regard to the question of expense. The right hon. Gentleman surely could not have read the evidence before the Committee, because that was exactly what the opponents of this Bill did not do. Instead of basing themselves on persons qualified to give an opinion they acted on the evidence of those who gave opinions on matters requiring expert knowledge which they did not possess. Dr. Murray, of Glasgow, was a very able lawyer, but he knew nothing whatever about valuation and assessment. The hon. Gentlemen who moved and seconded the Amendment accepted the authority of Dr. Murray against the authority of the expert assessor of the city of Glasgow, who was dealing with a question with which he was intimately connected. The question of expense with regard to valuation was inquired into very carefully by the Royal Commission. The minority stated that the separation of the land from the buildings could be made without any great expense. Those who raised this question of expense forgot that if the Bill was passed to-morrow it would not necessitate the creation of a new office and machinery. The machinery existed at the present time, and all that would be needed for the first year would be an addition to the staff of the assessors, who were perfectly competent to make these valuations, and who at the present time had to deal with practically similar questions. What was required with regard to this question of land values was information, and both sides ought to support this Bill because it was a Bill to obtain information as to the value of land. The hon. Member for West Aberdeen should welcome the Bill, because if he was right it would demonstrate the soundness of his opinion, whilst those who held opposite views advocated the change because they held that the taxation of land values was not only practicable but eminently just. This Bill, if it became an Act, would afford machinery by which land would be taxed by either of two methods. He had given some little attention to this subject to the length of introducing Bills which proceeded on the lines that valuation must be the first step to be taken in this matter, and he was glad that the Lord Advocate had taken this course, because when they had the valuation it would be open to them to decide whether they should make a complete change in the basis of rating. Though logically, and on economic grounds, the position for an alteration of the standard of rating was unassailable, he for one had not shut the door to the other alternative, namely, that it might be the best course to put a new and additional rate on land values. But that was a question which they would be able to decide when they had all the materials before them, when they had the actual value of the land which this Bill would give them. He passed on one side altogether the question whether it was impossible to separate the land from the buildings. That was held very tenaciously, but he thought that the Committee which sat last year, and supplemented the evidence given, by the Report of the Royal Commission, would wholly dispel that delusion. Until they had the facts with regard to the value of the land, it was impossible to come to a conclusion as to what was a just system of taxation for either local or Imperial purposes. Those who sat on the Committee which considered the income-tax were very much impressed by the fact that this country was behind almost every other country of importance, and behind the Colonies, in the statistical information which was really essential before deciding what was a just system of taxation. That applied to income-tax and certainly to land values. He would read one passage from the Report of Mr. Goschen in 1870 in which he said—

> "Speaking very broadly, in England fifty years ago the land bore two-thirds of the local taxation, and real property and houses and other property one-third. The latter now bear two-thirds, whilst land bears one-third."

That was an entire reversal of the position up to 1868. What was the position since? The last official information was in the Report on local taxation by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton, in 1893, when he was President of the Local Government Board. The one-third which was borne by land in 1868, or 33 per cent. of the whole, had fallen in 1891 to 15 per cent., and houses then bore 85 per cent. of the local taxation. It was only fair to point out that these figures were quite misleading, for this reason, that the division was an arbitrary and an unjust one. There had been what he might call an economic transfer as between land and houses. The figures given there were for houses, and included, of course, the value of the land on which the houses were built. Therefore, that went further to show that the present system of taxation was based on a foundation which had not enabled them really to ascertain whether it was a just or an unjust one. Therefore, to his mind the proposals of this measure would have a much more far-reaching effect than some hon. Members on the other side realised, because he believed that it would place at the disposal of the State information of the greatest possible value, which would guide them in considering not only problems of local taxation but problems of Imperial taxation. A good deal had been said on the other side as to the effect of these proposals. He would give the House one illustration. It would show what the taxation of land values meant in the case of unbuilt-on land in the City of Edinburgh. He was glad to think that a great change had come over the opinion of the other side of the House with regard to the taxation of unbuilt-on land. He did not wonder at it, because the case he was about to cite showed the utter absurdity of the present system. In Edinburgh the result was that out of a total taxation of £360,000, the unbuilt-on land, which was about one-fourth of the land of the city, only paid to the taxation of the city £420. He had taken the trouble to make a calculation, and he found that if that land was rated at only one-half of the feuing rate—which was allowing a very fair margin—the City of Edinburgh instead of receiving £420 would receive £30,000 per annum. If they looked at it from the point of view of taxation, there they had a new source of revenue. If they said that land ought not to be taxed at its real value, but only on the agricultural rent, then he replied by saying that if the land was required for public purposes it ought to be bought by the municipality on its rental value. If it was a question of rating, then the land was to be taken on its agricultural value. But if it was a question of purchase, it was a matter of ascertaining its real value; then there was no difficulty in finding out what that real value was. When the City of Edinburgh wanted new gas works they had to buy ground. There were 105 acres of land which was let at £5 10s. an acre; it belonged to a nobleman in the vicinity of Edinburgh. The Edinburgh and Leith Corporation Gas Commissioners thought that thirty years purchase would have been a very fair thing. That was a very generous calculation of the value of the land. Instead of paying thirty years purchase the Corporation had to pay 212 years purchase of the annual value. That transaction had taken place within the last few years, and it proved, he thought, that some such measure as that now before the House was very much wanted. He was glad that his right hon. friend was proceeding on the lines of first dealing with valuation, and, having then the real facts of the case before them, they would be able to arrive at a fair and just decision as to what course should be followed with regard to taxation.

MR. R. DUNCAN said the Leader of the Opposition had devoted his argument to showing what would be the consequences of the Bill. Personally he did not think that there was very much danger in trying to distinguish between sites and the buildings on them. But the Leader of the Opposition had remarked that there was something more dangerous behind, and that suggestion had not been repudiated by anyone in authority on the other side of the House. If they were really waiting for proposals of an extreme character such as had been indicated by his hon. friend, who had quoted the evidence, then he thought that they ought to make a stand and show that they would not do anything that would be a repudiation of a fair and honest bargain. Landowners were not always individual men; land was owned by friendly societies and other voluntary organisations, composed of men who laid their heads together and very often their slender purses for worthy purposes which required that they should obtain land. There were many on both sides of the House who were afraid that they were embarking on methods that were not really honest—that they were aiming at plundering one class for the benefit of another. They had heard a very honest admission from one hon. Member of the House—he referred to the hon. Member who came from Greater Britain, one of those Canadians or New Zealanders who came to this country and obtained seats in the House, and spoke with authority on these subjects. He had found, in passing through a severe ordeal of heckling in a Scottish constituency, that what was generally at the back of the opinion of the heckler was the practice of men who tried to secure land in the hope that the community would come and live round so that the price might rise and thus enable the owner to make a fortune. He thought the community should always have the right to acquire the land at a fair valuation, and that would check any such process as that. He found that his hecklers were generally satisfied with that answer. If it could be shown that land near a town or in any part of the country was not being put to a fair use, but was being held up, then the community should have the right of acquiring that land at a fair valuation; he presumed that they had that power now, and no effective resistance could be offered to such a transaction as that. With regard to the ulterior object of the Government, he did not think that they could face that House as honest men if they really desired to confiscate the property of the landlords, whether that landlord happened to be an individual or a society. Did they propose to resort to extreme measures and put taxation entirely on the land? No one had yet replied to one of the main arguments put by the Leader of the Opposition that the effect of the process inaugurated by this Bill would be that land would fall in value. It was said that the taxing of land values would benefit industry. He was a manufacturer, and as such he rejected this attempt to bribe him dishonestly at the expense of the landlord.

*MR. GULLAND (Dumfries Burghs) said that to him it seemed very difficult to understand the policy of the Opposition upon this question. Usually they described all measures introduced by the present Government as revolutionary, which ought not to be entered upon without a full inquiry; but when the Government suggested an inquiry they took the other line and argued that the Government had no right to inquire unless they stated the ultimate object of the future Bill to be introduced. This Bill seemed to him to be rightly founded upon theory and practice, and the difficulties which had been raised by hon. Members opposite were quite imaginary. It was always easy to find excellent reasons for doing nothing. The Leader of the Opposition said the House ought to consider the equities of the case, and he quite agreed with that argument. Anyone who had had any experience of municipal work in Scotland must know of numerous instances of the great injustice of the present system. Personally he had, for a long time, been a strong supporter of the principle of the taxation of land values. As a member of the Edinburgh Town Council his view on that subject had been greatly strengthened, and in municipal work one might find a great many object lessons upon which to strengthen one's theoretical belief. Two cases came before his notice on the town council which convinced him that the present system was not satisfactory. Some electors in his constituency brought before his notice the case of a road in East Edinburgh which was badly lighted, and he found upon inquiry that the road was too narrow and dark because on one side of it there was a field of a few acres belonging to a firm who were holding it up. That particular road led to a large district in which there had been erected artisans' tenements, and the people had to go to their houses along this dark, badly-paved road because that firm was holding up that large field almost in the centre of Edinburgh. He discovered that that land was let at a rental of £5 a year for feeding donkeys, and it paid rates on a sum of £1 5s., being one-quarter of its agricultural value. That piece of land was growing in value every day, because it was being gradually surrounded by houses, and the owners were holding it up until they might feu it at a large price. In another instance there was a piece of ground in Edinburgh in a central position which had not been used very profitably, and an enterprising Methodist Mission took it and built a number of shops upon it, which were now yielding big rents and rates, and on the top of the shops they built a church which they called a hall, and which they used for the benefit of the community on Sunday and week-day. Because they called it a hall and let it, the council rated it and assessed its value at £800 a year, and it had to pay about £200 a year in rates. At the present time property was assessed at its rental value. The owner made a return and it was accepted or modified by the assessor, and if the owner had any fault to find and could not come to terms with the assessor, he could appeal to the town council, which was generally composed of shrewd, common-sense business men who knew local circumstances and were advised on points of law by the town clerk. There need not be any fear that the men would not get justice. That system had in the past worked perfectly smoothly. The hon. Member for Ayr Burghs had said that practically there never was any appeal to the Court of Sessions. That was quite true, the only exception being where a large sum of money was involved; the ordinary run of cases was decided in the easiest and smoothest possible manner. As had been the case in the past, so it would be in the future. In Scotland the assessors held a very high position, and enjoyed the confidence of the public. About ten years ago a case occurred in his own personal experience. He was going to be the tenant for storage purposes of part of a large building which was being erected. He could not agree with the owner about the rent, and he suggested that they should leave the matter to the assessor to decide. The assessor fixed a sum for rent which was something between the owner's price and his own, and they both agreed to it in the most friendly way. In Scotland the assessor was considered to be a very fair man in whom the public had every confidence. Some new system was desirable, and there was a strong feeling in Scotland that the right hon. Gentleman was taking the right line in this Bill which would not lead to unnecessary friction.

*MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.) said the debate had shown a tendency to range over a very wide field. He would not follow the hon. Member opposite in his disquisition upon the taxation of land values in the colonies, beyond stating that although the South Australian municipalities had the power to tax land values they had never availed themselves of it. The Committee had stated in their Report that no material conclusion could be drawn from Colonial experience. The first proposition laid down by the Solicitor-General for Scotland was that the proposals in the Bill were equitable. What was the principle on which the proposals rested? He could not do better than quote the words of the Committee. The Report said—

> "The main principle which in the opinion of your Committee underlies proposals to tax Land Values is the setting up of a standard of rating whereby the ratupayer's contribution to the rates is determined by the yearly value of the land, which he owns or occupies, apart from the buildings and improvements upon it, the object being to measure the ratepayer's contributions, not by the value of the improvements in the land to any extent, but solely by the yearly value of the land itself."

The justification given in the Report was stated in the following manner—

> "The justification given for the adoption of the new standard is that land owes the creation and maintenance of its value to the presence, enterprise, and expenditure of the surrounding community."

The House would see that this Bill was merely, as the hon. Member for the Dumfries Burghs had said, an exploring Bill. It was a measure which proposed to set up a fishing inquiry in order to find out what were to be the practical details of the new standard of rating, because the House would have already recognised that the principle which underlay the proposals in the Bill was not that a new and additional rate was to be imposed, but that there was to be an alteration in the standard of rating. The hon. Member for Tyneside had said that the institution of a system of taxation of land values would enable them to provide a fund out of which old-age pensions could be paid. If he or the Lord Advocate thought that under the provisions of this Bill they would be able to tap some unknown source of revenue, some gold mine not hitherto worked, they would find that they were making a mistake. This was not a Bill to tap any new source of revenue, but to make an alteration in the system of rating. [MINISTERIAL Cheers.] He was glad to hear these cheers. The only way in which any material fresh contribution to the revenue, local or Imperial, would have accrued would have been by the adoption of the proposal of the Solicitor-General to tax the owners of existing feu duties. But that proposal had been put out of court by the Prime Minister. The original proposition of the Solicitor-General for Scotland was to take for local purposes 10 per cent. of the value of feu duties in existence. The Lord Advocate said last year that the Government could not accept Clause 7 of the Bill then before the House because existing contracts must be respected. What happened? The Solicitor-General went up and down Scotland preaching the new doctrine of the taxation of feu duties, and not one word of contradiction came from any member on the Treasury Bench until at last a most representative deputation waited on the Prime Minister and stated their case. Then only was the declaration made that, whatever happened, no taxation would be imposed on existing feu duties. That being so, this Bill would not provide any material accession to the revenue, but it would have far-reaching effects. It was introduced not for what it would bring in, but for what it would do. That was a departure by the Government from the free-trade principle of taxation for revenue only. What were the grounds on which a departure from the present system was proposed? They were told that the present system was assessment on rental. That was true. So far as the owner of property was concerned, it was assessment on rental; but it was more than that. It was assessment upon his income. What the owner paid was, as it were, a local income-tax. So far as the occupier was concerned, it was assessment on rental, but the rent which he paid was a measure of his ability to pay the assessment. He was taxed according, to use a well-known Scottish phrase, to his means and substance. If he paid a certain amount of rent, it was presumed that he was in a position to pay it, and it was further presumed that he was able to pay taxes upon it for the purposes of the local exchequer. He was far from saying that the present system of local taxation was perfect. He did not think it was. It was only a rough approximation to justice, but he thought it was a nearer approximation to justice than would be obtained under the proposals of the Solicitor-General. One objection which had been stated to the present system was that it allowed a tax on industry. If that was so, Scotland was not the only country which suffered from the injustice. In Prussia there was not only a land tax, but an additional tax was deliberatley imposed on the lines of the existing system of taxation in Scotland. He had never known a case in which a man refused to make improvements, or to build a new house, because he was afraid of the burden of rates which might ensue. Supposing they took it for granted that the idea underlying the Bill was correct, did the Bill carry it out? Not a bit. The theory was that there ought to be no taxes on industry. This Bill deliberately imposed a tax on improvements. He had looked through the Bill, and he did not find any exemption even in favour of reclaimed land. It was said that land was not a product of industry. That was true in a sense. No doubt the actual silica was not the product of industry, but before land was fit for agriculture, or for the erection of buildings, money had to be spent upon it. He now came to the second position that this Bill proposed to create—the equality of sacrifice in the payment of rates. He had some doubts as to that doctrine. There was a passage in Mill, who was often quoted as an authority on this subject, where he said with a great deal of force that whether the person with £10,000 a year cared less for £1,000 than the person with £1,000 cared for £100, and if so how much less, did not appear to him capable of being decided with that degree of certainty on which a legislator or a financier ought to act. But supposing they admitted the doctrine of equality of sacrifice, did the Bill carry that doctrine out? Not a bit of it. So far from bringing about equality of sacrifice, it accentuated the inequality. It had been pointed out that the practical effect of this Bill in the great cities of the country would be to drive the poor into the slums. Land, it was said, must be taxed according to its full use; if it was not being fully used it was not bearing its full value in producing capacity to the community. It followed therefore, that if they had land with comparatively poor houses on it, the proposal of the Government was to say to the occupiers of those houses: "You have no right to be here; you have got to pay for the full value of this house if you stay, and if you will not pay these rates you must go away from this quarter of the town and live in another quarter of the town which is fit for the poor." That, reduced to all its nakedness, was the proposition of the Government. Let them see how the equality of sacrifice came in in another way. Let them take one of the Secretary for Scotland's small holdings. A man lived and worked on his plot of 50 acres and paid, say, a rent of £50 a year. Next door to him lived a great captain of industry, who also had a plot of 50 acres, on which he had built a magnificent villa, with pleasure grounds, hot-houses, fish ponds, and all the other appurtenances of luxury, and he paid £1,000 a year in rent. Under the existing system these men were rated according to their ability to pay. The small holder would be rated on £50, and the captain of industry on £1,000. Under the system proposed by the Government, these two men would pay the same amount in rates because they were both living on the same amount of land. The doctrine of the equality of sacrifice was being stretched to pretty lengths if that was to be the result. Then he came to the third proposition, the doctrine of the unearned increment. He must say that that was an odd proposition coming from the free-trade Party—that any restraint of trade should be enforced by law. But he let that pass. The doctrine of the unearned increment had been defined that day, and it was said that there ought to be an appropriation of the increase in the value of plots of land which had been earned by the community. The hon. Member for South Edinburgh had said it was an absurdity and that it was hard and intolerable that a man who sat still and did nothing should see his land increase in value from £3 10s. to £25 per acre per annum; that that obviously called for redress. But let the House consider that the increment from £3 10s. to £25 was not the product of a day. The land while that increment was going on was "*extra commercium*," it was locked up, but so was the capital. And let the House further consider that £25 a year per acre meant, roughly speaking, about £500 for a purchase price. £500 to-day for a purchase price was £70 fifty years ago, and £70 fifty years ago was £3 10s. per annum. The result was that if a man sold his land for £25 to-day, that land was at once rated by the community at £25, and moreover, when they came to consider the unearned increment for the past fifty years they had been rating it at £3 10s. Therefore, they got the result that the community for fifty years had been rating the land at £3 10s., and that £3 10s. increasing over fifty years brought out exactly the same sum of £25 per annum which was realised by the value of the land to-day. That was purely a fortuitous instance proving the correctness of the theory that the increment in value was not the product of a day, but had got to be looked at over a series of years. As to the second point of the proposition "earned by the community," there were increments in value—the Thames Embankment, for instance—which were caused by special improvements made by the municipality. In Scotland the municipality levied what was called an improvement rate on those whose properties were supposed to have been improved. A rate was levied, and *ex hypothesi* those people who shared in the benefits were supposed to contribute towards its cost. And they did. But that was not the point at issue. It was the general industry of the community which had created the increased value. It was an increase in demand, but what created an increase in demand? Let him put a case to the House. Was the increase in the demand invariably created, or largely created, or at all created by the presence of the community? Let them take a case that had happened recently, where a manufacturer went down to a country district—to Alexandria—the other day. He put up works and workmen's cottages. He not only put up those houses in value, but all the land values in Alexandria. Did the hon. Members say that that was directly attributable to the community? Supposing the manufacturer manufactured for the foreign market, and not for the English market. Let them take Glasgow. Glasgow was the Clyde, and the Clyde was Glasgow. If the Clyde were to become a ditch with a foot of water in it to-morrow the prosperity of Glasgow would be gone. Glasgow lived by its oversea trade, and if to any community was to be ascribed the rise in land value, in the case of manufacturers who found their market in the community overseas, it was the community overseas to whom the rise should be ascribed. And if they were going to give the result of that increment to any community, to be logical they should give the result of the rise in land value in Lancashire to the communities in India, China, and Japan. Further, let them suppose they had a manufacturer who was carrying on a flourishing industry. By his skill and enterprise he had built up his industry; his works had increased the land value; then for some reason or another, from the operation of some foreign tariff or other, he was cut out of his overseas market, and he closed his mills; down went the land value, and the community would be there all the same. The community could not save the land value. There were then the other clouds of glory which were supposed to follow in the wake of this Bill. It was suggested that the Bill would stimulate building and reduce rents. The only remark he had to make on that was that it was absolutely certain it would reduce the margin of profit for the builder. And whatever reduced the margin of profit, reduced the inducement to build; that therefore reduced building, and reduced building would invariably mean increased rents. He could develop that if he liked, but hon. Members who were interested in its development could read it in the minority report of the Committee on the Taxation of Land Values. One thing was certain, and that was that the value of certain premises would be lowered. Upon large works which were now paying a large return it would be lowered; upon property which stood upon a comparatively small square of land and brought in a large rental; and upon public houses. In all other cases the value would be increased to a limit in many cases far beyond 20s. in the £. There were places in the north of Scotland where 20s. in the £ was the basis of rates now, and if they were to take this basis it lessened the amount of the assessable rental, and it followed that the rate of imposition would have to be increased, and increased in many places considerably beyond 20s. in the £. As to the contention that the Bill was practicable, he had said already that it was a fishing inquiry, and, if so why did not the Government select certain areas for the purposes of their experiment? Why experiment with the whole of the land of Scotland? It had come down to this: that valuation was a matter of opinion, a matter of uncertainty, and that accuracy and precision were unattainable and unintelligible. But the Bill proposed to enact that the owner was to make a return and estimate the value of his property. He was to make a guess. If he did not make a guess he was fined £20, if he made a wrong guess £50, and if he did not pay he was to be sent to prison. Those penalties were imposed by the Act of 1854 in relation to a valuation on facts, and if a man did not make a return he did it wilfully, if he made a wrong return he made it knowingly, and hence the penalties. They were continued by this Bill, where accuracy was impossible and unintelligible. Was it such an easy matter? The Solicitor-General suggested that the assessors did it now. What were the real facts at present? In the ordinary case the valuer had to find the value to a hypothetical tenant. He took the actual facts, buildings and circumstances, and he estimated for a hypothetical tenant. He either estimated the cost of the buildings and took a percentage of the cost, or he took a reasonable percentage on the profit the man made out of the building. Both those methods had repeatedly been condemned by the Courts as unjust. Those valuations were made on actual facts with only one unknown factor in the equation, and yet they were not felt to be satisfactory by the Courts. How was it supposed that the Courts would regard an estimate founded upon a hypothetical buyer of a hypothetical property under hypothetical circumstances? That was the proposition in the Bill. It was suggested that they might apply the rule of thumb; that they might deduct the value of the building from the site, if sold in the open market. That view was carefully inquired into in the Committee and disapproved, because it was shown that it would lead to fallacious results. A case was brought forward of a house which cost £5,000 to build but which to-day could be purchased for £3,000, and if they deducted the value of the building from the value of the site they were left in that case with a *minus* quantity. They were therefore left with the proposal that individual valuations should be made. That would take a long time and would be very costly. One assessor before the Committee said he could, in the ordinary "jog-trot" of business of an assessor, value sites apart from the buildings in five minutes. It rather savoured of "valuation while you wait"; but, taking five minutes for each valuation, if six skilled assessors were to start valuing the sites of Glasgow—225,000 of them—and went on working day and night without cessation for meals or rest, they would only just complete that valuation by Christmas. If they were to value the site on the basis that it was the only site in the market, it would be intelligible; but if it was valued as a site that was clear and on the assumption that all the other sites were in the market at the time, the former valuation must be fallacious. Any man could give a valuation, for instance, of £1,000 of Great Northern

Stock, but no concatenation of experts could give the value of £100,000 of Great Northern Stock if it was all put upon the market at the same time. The Government professed to be a free trade Government. Mr. Lowe, in his Budget speech of 1883, said that the grand principle of free trade—far more valuable than free trade itself—was that no class of the community should be made tributary to any other class. [Cheers.] Hon. Gentlemen cheered that. He commended that to the attention of the seventy hon. Members who sat in various parts of the House, and to those hon. and right hon. Gentlemen who sat on the Treasury Bench, who were members of the league for the nationalisation of land. The doctrine of Henry George had been received with certain modifications and accepted by a considerable number of hon. Gentlemen opposite; but he and those with whom he sat continued to believe with John Stuart Mill that the principle of an exclusive tax such as a tax on land was a principle foreign to common honesty. Should such a scheme ever enlist a large Party in its support, that fact would indicate a laxity of pecuniary integrity in national affairs.

*MR. BARNES (Glasgow, Blackfriars) said he desired to associate himself with this Bill, which he regarded as a first step in the direction of restoring to the community that which had been earned by the community. The matter of increased value accruing to land and of the tilting of that value into the buckets of those who did nothing for it, had gone on so long that it was a marvel that the people had been so patient as to allow it. He had in his mind the case of a shop in the main street in the city of Glasgow the rent of which during the occupancy of the present tenant had risen from £150 to £450. Who had put on that increased value? It was the industry and enterprise of the occupier together with the presence and necessities of the surrounding community. There was certainly no increased value in the building during the last thirty or forty years, because whatever the value might have been when it was erected it was of less value now owing to the deterioration of the bricks and mortar which had depreciated in value as all products must. The increase value was therefore due to the industry of the occupier and the necessities of the surrounding population. Yet everything sold in that shop had to be increased in price because of the rates that had to be paid and also of the rent. He did not think that the analogy of the Alexandria manufactory had any relevance to this discussion. Far too much was made of the foreign demand as against the home demand which exceeded the foreign by at least ten times. This Bill was preparing the ground for something which was to follow. As had been said by another speaker in the debate, it was not so much increased revenue that was looked for in this Bill and the one which he hoped would follow on, but that it would open up areas for the workers which were now closed to labour by the private land owners. In the outskirts of towns land was held idle in the anticipation of obtaining an increased value, and other land was artificially increased in value and the demand for labour decreased. The main and practical thing was that the supply of land would be increased and the price diminished and rent would be decreased as a natural consequence. Reference had been made to trade union and friendly societies being largely interested in land values just as other corporations were interested and that therefore the Labour representatives should be loth to put their hands on land values. The interest of friendly societies and trade unions in land values was infinitesimal as compared with their interests as citizens. He welcomed this Bill, and he hoped that the Government would go on with it. The last speaker had put his finger on a weak spot in regard to the taxation of land values, and that was that in the towns, and especially on the outer fringe of towns, the value of land was so great that if it was taxed according to value it would be impossible to get land for cottages and gardens, and the cottager would be driven elsewhere; but he would remind the hon. Member that that was just what took place now. The centres of large towns were frequently taken up by warehouses or other high buildings of six or eight stories, and it was impossible for workmen to get land for their dwellings, with the result that they were driven out four, five, or six miles, and they had to travel that distance to and from their work every day. Though the taxation of land values might have the effect of perpetuating that state of things, yet the advantage on the other side was so great that he thought it overbalanced the disadvantage. For his part he was ready to support what he believed to be the right principle, even taking that slight disadvantage into account, for he believed that the advantage to the community would be immense, and that the demand for labour would be such that they would soon have something towards old-age pensions, or at all events wages would be larger as a result of this reform, while the money which ought long ago to have gone to the remedying of social evils would now be devoted to that purpose instead of going into the pockets of those who had not earned it.

*Mr. COCHRANE (Ayrshire, N.) said that of all the reasons which had been given in support of the Bill he thought the most astonishing was that given by the hon. Member for the Blackfriars Division. They were to have old-age pensions, cheaper houses, and larger wages, and all this was read into a Bill which the Lord Advocate had said was for information only and to add one column to the valuation roll. If these were the expectations which were entertained of the Bill he was not surprised that it should have given rise to considerable debate and expressions of opinion on both sides of the House. Expressions of opinion hostile to the Bill had not been confined to one side, and some very trenchant criticism had come from an hon. Member opposite. The hon. Member for South Edinburgh had invited the House to follow the example of Australia and New Zealand: it seemed rather strange that he should ask the House to adopt a system existing in some of our Colonies as regarded rating, and yet he of all others would be the first to say that on fiscal questions we were to pay no regard to either their example or their desires whatever. The hon. Member had adduced some very strange propositions, for he had said that a poor man who lived in a big house ought therefore to pay lower rates. What were the objects of rates after all? They were to provide for policing, tramways, lighting, and poor rates. The Solicitor-General had told them that agricultural land within what he called the zone would have a substantial increase of rates; and the hon. Gentleman poured his sympathy on the man who lived in "a sumptuous house" and said he must pay lower rates. For his part his sympathy was for the agriculturist. Why should he have to pay a higher rate than the man who lived in a sumptuous mansion? On the contrary, in the case of the agriculturist who had to earn his living they ought rather to reduce the rates which he had to pay. Why should the man with a sumptuous house escape with a lower rate? He could not see any reason. The Solicitor-General had given them an example which was familiar to them—that of a corner house in Edinburgh which had been pulled down and rebuilt to a height of seven storeys. The man had laid out capital on the building in order to get additional trade; and, if there was any unearned increment in the case, it ought to go to the railway company who had brought from every part the tourists who dealt with that very shop and enabled the owner, from the profits which he made, to add to his premises. But the learned Solicitor-General said that because he had put up this building he should rather pay a lower than a higher rate. He ventured to say that if he had put up this expensive building as a profitable speculation, it was in some degree a test of the owner's ability to pay the rate, and he could see no earthly reason why he should be relieved of any portion of the rates at the expense of some of his neighbours. They all knew that at the present moment the landed interest seemed to be fair sport for the Radical Party, who from Scottish and English Grand Committees shot at those unfortunate persons who were interested in land, and who were now being attacked in respect of land values. They bid fair to make the investment of capital in enterprises connected with land impossible in the future. What was to be the position of an unfortunate proprietor under the Lord Advocate's Bill? His duty now was to furnish a return, and if he failed to do so he was liable to heavy penalties under the Act of 1854. The smaller the proprietor the more difficulty would he find in making his return. A large proprietor had his agents and factors, but what would be the position of the small proprietor who had nobody to help him? To compel the small proprietor to make the proposed return would inflict a grievous burden upon him. The statement that no immediate taxation was to follow would give him a false sense of security. He would say why should he incur this expense if no taxation was to follow, and the result would be that the assessors would each fix the valuation according to his fancy and the opinions he might hold, and so the figures of the third column would be arbitrary, haphazard, and unreliable, and they would have a misleading series of valuations which would possibly be used afterwards to lend colour to some Socialistic experiment on the part of the present Government. The Lord-Advocate said on the First Reading that Parliament would be able to note these facts in the valuation as a basis not of assessment alone but for land transfer. If it was intended to base a system of land transfer upon a valuation return made up in that way he ventured to say that the figures upon which they would have to rely would not be at all suitable for any purpose of that kind. Why should they depart from the existing practice under the Act of 1854? Under that system there was a uniform valuation of land in Scotland which was familiar, which had worked extremely well, and from which, according to the Lord Advocate, had worked with "smoothness, precision, and efficiency," and on the admission of the Solicitor-General, there had been this year no appeals. That being so, a strong and definite case ought to be made out before they set up a different system. Rent was considered to be some test of the capacity of a man to pay rates, and it would be a much safer test than the hypothetical value provided for in this Bill. One man might have a large mansion and another a small building occupying the same space of ground, and in estimating the value of those sites why should they exclude all the buildings and erections and other improvements. The result would be that they would have the small man occupying a site not fully covered by a comparatively small house paying the same rate as the man who lived in a large building, on a site contiguous and of the same size, and the Solicitor-General argued that that was quite proper because the smaller man was occupying a site which was unsuitable. Was it suggested that people should be divided up into classes? Were the men occupying large houses to be driven into one part of the town and the small men into another part? Was the Solicitor-General not aware that it was one of the most important necessities in the life of a working man that he should have a dwelling place as near to his work as possible? The present system was, in his opinion, a far fairer system than that proposed in this Bill. He would like to ask who sought this change and upon what grounds. He knew there had been men going about Scotland advocating a single tax on land, but notwithstanding what had been said by the hon. Member for Blackfriars, the Socialist Party were not all in favour of this system of a single tax. The hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil had repudiated the single tax proposal. They were told that nothing was to happen until Parliament otherwise determined. It was evidently contemplated that there was to be some further legislation, but they had not heard so far any clear definition of the shape that legislation was to take. Judging from the speeches of the Solicitor-General in the country, and from an address delivered by the Lord Advocate at a meeting in connection with an association which had for its basis the nationalisation of land values, he thought the present Bill might be taken as merely the fingerpost that pointed in the direction of absolute confiscation of the whole of the land values. It was not enough for the Lord Advocate to say that it was merely a matter of filling up a column which would be added to the valuation roll. There were certain practical difficulties which would present themselves to everyone familiar with the subject. In urban districts the proprietor who was responsible for making the valuation would have to estimate the value of the site apart from the buildings or structural improvements, but his position would be nothing as compared with that of the unfortunate owner of a farm, who would be required under this Bill to imagine his property divested of its house, its farm buildings, and its stone walls, but still retaining its hedges and trees. Why, too, should the sums spent on drainage be included in the value of the land, when drainage was not to be taken into consideration as an improvement, as a stone wall or building was? The Government were asking the landowners to perform an impossible task when they asked them to discriminate between the value of the land and the value of the buildings on it.

The Local Taxation Commission went carefully into that question, and, after hearing witnesses, they came to the conclusion that to value land and the buildings upon it separately would be a matter of the greatest difficulty, and, indeed, that it would be practically impossible. Various estimates had been put forward as to the cost of these proceedings, and the authority of Dr. Murray had been quoted. Whatever the figure might be, the amount would be enormous, and it was to be put on the ratepayers. For what reason? Everyone admitted that the present system worked on the whole extremely well, and any change of which the country could approve would require very great evidence and weight of opinion behind it. It was estimated that the local authorities in Scotland had borrowed £61,000,000 on the security of the rates. The proposed change in the form of the security would practically paralyse the finances of these local authorities. While the taxation of land values would not ease any of the burdens which now fell upon the ratepayers, it would still further depreciate the already depressed value of securities which were largely held by charities, benefit societies, and the working classes in Scotland. He challenged any hon. Member for Scotland to deny the depreciation which had taken place in the value of feu duties in Scotland since this class of legislation was first introduced into the House, and that in consequence the value of that favourite security of the working classes had been largely reduced. He thought it would shake the confidence of the small investors and discourage thrift, and, above all things, drive the poor man who now occupied a house in a position suitable for his work from that position, because he would have to pay a higher rate than at present. He thought it would inflict a great amount of hardship, and he had failed so far to hear one single argument in favour of the proposals of the Government.

Mr. THOMAS SHAW: The debate on this Bill has in more than one respect been very gratifying to its authors. I think the whole House will bear me out if I say that while there have been here and there criticisms of the principle underlying the Bill, so far as the shape and frame of the Bill is concerned there has not been delivered from either side of the House any criticism except one by the right hon. Gentleman the late Prime Minister, and that criticism affected the clause as to definition of improvements, which is a fair subject for inquiry, and I propose to address myself to that subject. Apart from that statement it will be observed that so far as the frame of the Bill is concerned nothing has arisen to shake its structure, and, so far as the one criticism affecting it is concerned, it is purely a Committee point which is capable of adjustment and amendment. My hon. friend who has just addressed the House has put the whole case in regard to the opposition to this Bill in the well-known formula, "Why depart from the existing system?" That is the whole case against the Bill—why depart from the existing system?—and that query is presented to us by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition as if we were living in a land of obstruction, and as if we, like himself, were haunted by the spectre of no other person than Henry George. The fact is that this Bill is presented to the House after numerous preliminary inquiries and after the discussion in this House year after year of numerous Bills affecting this question. During the last Parliament a majority was obtained for a Bill having a principle underlying it which is the principle to be approached by the present Bill, and indeed at that time—and I can hardly conceive that it was in view of a possible appeal to the electors—the Tory Party in this House voted by a very considerable majority, of which I shall give the figures, in favour of the principle of just such a Bill as this. The development of opinion in this country on the subject, not theoretical opinion, but the opinion of practical and skilled men upon this important social topic, has been very marked, and if the House will forgive me, I do not mean to shirk the issue which is contained in the questions that have been addressed as to what is behind this Bill. This is a Valuation Bill pure and simple, confined absolutely to that, and by expressed terms it leaves out the whole question of assessment and rating, but that assessment and rating are behind it, that they will in future years take account of the standard which is now to be set up, either wholly or partly, or in circumstances such as Parliament will then determine, I do not for a moment mean to deny, and indeed I should not be here urging the Second Reading of this Bill unless I were convinced that behind it there is to be provided a remedy for the present state of matters, more particularly in our municipal centres. I was proposing to show that we are not acting from mere theory, but after a very careful scrutiny of very powerful and skilled advisers. Hon. Members will have heard of the Housing Commission so far back as June twenty years ago, in 1885. What was the verdict of that Commission? If the House will permit me I will read this passage—

> "At present land available for building in the neighbourhood of our populous centres, though its capital value is very great, is probably producing a small yearly return until it is let for building, and they can thus afford to keep their land out of the market, and to part with it only in small quantities, so as to raise the price even beyond the natural monopoly price. Meantime, the general expenditure of the town on improvements is increasing the value of their property. If this land were rated, say, at 4 per cent. on its selling value the owners would have a more direct incentive to part with it, and a twofold advantage would result to the community. First of all, the valuable property would contribute to the rates, and thus the burden of the occupiers would be diminished by the increase in the rateable property; secondly, the owners of the building land would be forced to offer their land for sale, and thus their competition with one another would bring down the price of building land and so diminish the tax in the shape of ground-rent or price paid for the land which is now levied by the adjacent landowners—a tax, be it remembered, which is no recompense for any industry or expenditure on their part, but is the natural result of the industry and activity of the townspeople themselves."

If there ever was a demonstration of the need for a transaction which will change the standard of rating, this is that demonstration. But it does not end there. Reference has been made in the course of the debate—too little reference, I think—to the Minority Report of the year 1891. I wonder if the right hon. Gentlemen the late Prime Minister thinks that that Minority Report was dictated or animated by the principles of Henry George. It was written by the late Lord Kinross, a well-known and most eminent authority on rating both in Scotland and in this country, a man whose opinion and whose arbitrative power were appealed to on both sides of the border. Who concurred with him in this revolutionary minority? There was Sir J. B. Balfour, there was Lord Balfour of Burleigh, there was Sir Edward Hamilton, late Secretary to the Treasury, and there was Sir George Murray, present Secretary to the Treasury, and these are the authorities, and not Henry George, although with regard to Mr. Henry George, I will venture in the face of Parliament to make this observation, that he is one of those authors whom, if you carefully read, you will ever afterwards avoid sneering at. You may differ from him, but that you are dealing with a master mind no one who has ever carefully studied that great author will deny. I differ from him. Coming back to this Minority Report, what did these revolutionary authorities reply to the question, "Why change the present standard?" They said—

> "There is a strong argument for rating site values on the ground of public policy, regard being had to the effect of the tax on industries and developments. Our present rate indisputably hampers building. Buildings are necessary to life and necessary to business of every kind. Now the tendency of our present rate must be to discourage building, to make houses fewer, worse, and dearer."

Anyone who knows the condition, as I happen to know it, of some of our congested districts, not only in the towns of Scotland, but in very remote districts will endorse that statement. If I had said that I should have been denounced as using most explosive language, but that is the written testimony of these highly skilled persons. In answer to the question "Why change the present standard of rating?" our answer is, "We stand upon writings such as these, which have been presented to the House and the country in the skilled Reports and the documents prepared by skilled people."

MR. YOUNGER: Do they suggest this as the basis of rating?

MR. THOMAS SHAW: Yes, they suggest it as the basis of rating, and their summary and conclusion is—

> "It will do something towards lightening burdens in respect of buildings, and it will do something towards solving the difficult and urgent housing question."

The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition was good enough to say that he wondered why the land problem was always presented in a Scottish form first, and most acutely. He seemed to think that we were a *corpus vile*, as one distinguished speaker called his country, for experiment. To that I answer that we have the most acute experience in Scotland of any country in Europe of the evils of overcrowding in the housing of our population, and the Government are determined, if they can, to address themselves to the remedying of that social question. [Cheers.] That seems to be assented to by both sides of the House. My further proposition is that if we want radically to attack the housing question we must attack the valuation of land, as shown by these skilled Commissioners. The question is often put, "Is land held up?" If land is not held up, this Bill will show it. If land is held up, this Bill will show it. That is a fact worthy of being ascertained by Parliament. We do not hear so much now of the impracticability of valuation. The time was when my learned friend Mr. Cripps and I would break a lance over this question of valuation. Mr. Cripps' point was that it was an impossible job, but everyone who has had experience, as men of my own profession have had, of the practicability of valuing land separately from houses knows that it is done every day. The idea that it is an impracticable task cannot be maintained. It is not a novel experiment. The Leader of the Opposition seems to think the Government have got this by some sudden inspiration from the clouds, and that they have for the first time put it into Parliamentary shape. It is not so. There is experience much nearer home than South Australia or New Zealand. The Manchester Corporation Act was passed having this specially in view, and under that Act it is the duty of the assessing authority to lay the value of the assessment on the land as distinct from the houses. The London County Council Improvements Act with regard to the purchase of the Tower Bridge has a clause of exactly the same kind. I maintain, therefore, that we are following, not only the Reports of Royal Commissions, but almost the text of certain clauses and sections which have passed through this House. I am aware that the Bill will tend to the better development of land and the throwing of land open, but the cardinal consideration in my mind, however, is that our proposal will ameliorate the acuteness of the problem as to housing in our great cities. But there was another object. The hon. Gentleman who last spoke said that I had thrown out the suggestion that this assessment of land values might be of Parliamentary use in the question of land transfer. I hope it will be reported far and wide that in the opinion of the Government when these capital values are obtained they may be taken notice of in the future by Parliament in the case of the transfer of land. The instances are so familiar. [Hear, hear.] I suppose the other side defend them, judging from the cheer of the hon. Member for Lanarkshire, but we have not forgotten them. There is the Rosyth case in which a most estimable Lord in Scotland, acting under the most skilled advice, dealt with the Government of the day, and obtained for agriculture land eighty-five years purchase. We remember the case of Granton where 105 acres rated at £5 10s. an acre which, with an equivalent of thirty years purchase, would have given £17,300 was sold for public purposes to the Edinburgh Corporation for £224,000, or 124 years purchase. But there is a further and more acute case than that, namely, the case of the Water Trust of Edinburgh, who required some land for a small reservoir. They purchased forty-five acres of land rated at £3 5s. an acre, the total value of which at thirty years purchase was £4,387, and the actual price paid was £20,000 or 136 years purchase. A further case which we remember is the Clyde Trust, which, in the neigbourhood of Renfrew, acquired 110 acres of land at a price equivalent to 435 years purchase. I venture to say that apart altogether from rating, even if the fact of the capital value had to be disclosed year by year these lands would, never have appeared in the valuation roll of Scotland with a capital value of anything like that. If there be an attempt to keep down the capital value in future negotiations to an unduly small figure, I think that attempt would be baulked by the possibility that the public fact and the capital value record will remain as a thing to be taken note of. With regard to expense there has been a great deal of wild language. It is said that it will cost £160,000 to the assessors of Glasgow to value Glasgow; the assessor himself says the figure will be only £6,000. Who is going to judge between the man who is not a valuer, and the man who has been a valuer for forty years? I will take Mr. Harper, the statistical officer of the London County Council. He said he could value the land in London at an expense for the first year of only £25,000, and afterwards of £5,000 a year. I think that at once dispels the fears of the people of Scotland or their spokesmen in this House with regard to the question of expense. The Leader of the Opposition remarked that there was no steam behind the Bill if we left out of it a proposal to tax under existing contracts feu duties. I do not blame him in any way, but may I explain that the best support for this Bill in all these municipal agitations, where 500 public bodies have demanded this reform, has come from the large corporations in England? They want to get at the value of the land by taxing the owner for the time being. The idea that the want of these little items as to existing feu duties is to take off steam from the agitation is grossly to miscalculate the real social forces which are behind the measure. But the right hon. Gentleman said, if the community has made the value, and the community are to get it, who are the community? They are our citizens. Some of them in past generations have been working up these values, and this is only a restoration, and the answer of the present community is that this mischief has been going on for generations; that the injustice has been going on for a long time, and we are determined to deal with it. The right hon. Gentleman asked why railways and canals were not included in the scheme. If we were going to start a new system of rating altogether, as at the beginning of things, we should no doubt make the state of affairs somewhat different from what it is, but I will try and explain in as untechnical language as possible the situation with regard to railways and canals. The situation with regard to railways and canals, as the House knows, is that they form a series of threads passing over the areas of a large number of municipal, parish, and county authorities. We can only take a railway as a unit, which has a monopoly granted by the State that can only be valued by a reference to its returns, and there are elaborate provisions for taking stock of the receipts of railways, of estimates, of values, of stations, and wharves and docks, and then for taking the entire line and dividing certain actuarial results which are thus produced over the whole chain of operations. It is perfectly manifest that this requires a separate set of considerations, and for over fifty years in Scotland it has required also a separate set of officials. We have determined to take the line of least resistance, and we have taken the line which is in accordance with the precedent of the last fifty years in Scotland. When we have got the whole of these returns, with all the experience, I know not what we will do, but, as at present advised, I shall certainly be very slow indeed ever to suggest that railways and canals should come under the same system of rating. It is said with regard to agricultural land that the schedule of improvements here is so specific that it deals with what I may call visible improvements, fencing, building, dwelling-houses, and the like, and with that visibility attaching, it necessarily, says the right hon. Gentleman, leaves out of account those improvements which may have gone on from the time of Noah and the Flood until now. Of course it does, and I can imagine an argument which would have delighted the House if we had attempted to begin at the point of prairie value; but because we rigorously confine the scope of the improvement which can be inexpensively dealt with, in the sense of its being visible to all parties, and being the subject of ordinary everyday estimates, we are told that we have violated the theory that improvements should be separated from the land. We have not violated any theory at all. We have taken what in practice will prove to be a very fair and sound method of getting at the value of the land, less the improvements which are the subject of ordinary estimate. I hope I have not put this too technically in answering the request made to me. There is one final request which the right hon. Gentleman made to me, and that is with regard to woods. Upon that I will concede that while we have only included the buildings, erections, and structural improvements, there may well be a point for fair consideration in Committee whether woods should not also be included. The Government is in no way against that. We deal with woods as an ordinary crop, and that is the value of the crop along with the land, but if it be thought that the woods come into the value of the land we are quite open to conviction, and I think probably a word or two might effect the Amendment. In conclusion, with regard to the whole Bill, I will state one or two propositions. This Bill will establish definitely the relation that land value bears to the capitalised rental value. The House is hardly aware of how much confusion and contradiction there is on this subject. Some people hold that the site value is only equal to one-half, and some say it is equal to one-tenth of the whole existing capital value. There are other difficult and troublesome questions of that kind which can only be settled when we have ascertained the facts, and this Bill will ascertain them. My second proposition is, that it will provide an annual record, which may be of extreme advantage, of the increment of land values as such. This would go on from year to year. Every district will be distinct in the Parliamentary Return, to which each proprietor would be a party. It will then be open for consideration whether there should not, in the terms of the Minority Report, be a distinct clause also for site values. There are many serious cases, I believe, of land held up from building or profitable uses as agricultural land. That will aggravate the case, because agricultural land is favoured by the Legislature, and was particularly favoured by the late House of Commons. Therefore the hardship is two-fold. It is favoured in point of taxation to begin with, but when it is agricultural land inside the ambit of a borough, it is going to get an additional favour; it escapes the value of the capitalised sum, and, being also agricultural land, it is specially favoured by the Legislature. Our view is that there will be revelations made by this Return which will make demonstrable, especially in urban and suburban areas, and even in the districts surrounding villages, that the cases are such as to be dealt with practically on capitalised value. Furthermore, the Bill will give a return of the capitalised value of unoccupied land in the country, which is not at present rated at all. There is a large amount of agricultural land which is rated at too little, but there is a large amount which is not rated at all, and, so far as these two elements are concerned the community and the local authorities will undoubtedly tap a fresh source of additional revenue. Besides, it will definitely show the feasibility of transactions, whether of taxation or transfer, with land value as the basis. Then I think it will pave the way for gradually lessening the burden of taxation upon improvements, and for securing that the value which is made by the community, in increasing the value of the land, shall share all the burdens of the community, so that, in fact, the value which the communal activity has made shall be recognised as a subject for recouping the community. Now the importance of these reforms is conceded on all hands. But we also concede that it is a very complex subject. No man can handle it without feeling that it is a very complex subject indeed, and the urgency of reform is apt to be lost sight of in its appalling complexity. If we remove that complexity we shall be able to give more attention to its urgency. Not only is this a rating question, but it is undoubtedly associated with housing, the health of the people, and social reform. At the root of all this lies the land question. This in town or in country is a peculiarly arduous task for any Party to tackle, but, though arduous, it is an honourable one. The Government are impelled to it by the desire for greater and more equitable activity in the community, and among the humblest of the population we have this in view, that the conditions of health and housing will be promoted by the reforms of which I hope this will be the happy inauguration.

Question put.

The House divided; Ayes, 294; Noes; 76. (Division List, No. 274.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Alden, Percy
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Armitage, R.
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Joseph A (Finsbury, E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnes, G. N.
Beale, W. P.
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S. Geo.)
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Black, Arthur W.
Boland, John
Brace, William

Branch, James
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Brunner, RtHnSirJ.T(Cheshire
Bryce, J. Annan
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, W. J. D.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. SydneyCharles
Byles, William Pollard
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt. Hn. RichardKnight
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Channing, Sir Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Churchill, Rt. Hon. Winston S.
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Clynes, J. R.
Coats, SirT.Glen(Renfrew, W.)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, SirWm.J.(S.Pancras, W
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, CH(Sussex, E.Grinst'd)
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Crossley, William J.
Cullinan, J.
Curran, Peter Francis
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, David(MontgomeryCo.
Davies, Ellis William (Eifion)
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Devlin, Joseph
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dickinson, W.H.(St.Pancras, N.
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C.(Barrow-in-Furness
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, MajorE.Martin(Walsall)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Sir Francis (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Erskine, David C.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Evans, Samuel T.
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Freeman-Thomas, Freeman
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, RtHn.Sir W.Brampton
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r
Harmsworth, R.L.(Caithn'ss-sh
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harvey, W.E. (Derbyshire, N.E.
Harwood, George
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemmerde, Edward George
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henry, Charles S.
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hogan, Michael
Holt, Richard Durning
Hope, W.Bateman(Somers't, N
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jackson, R. S.
Jacoby, Sir James Alfred
Jardine, Sir J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William(Carnarvonshire)
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
Kilbride, Denis
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Lardner, James Carrige Rushe
Law, Hugh A. (Donegal, W.)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lehmann, R. C.
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J.M.(FalkirkB'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, D. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeigh, Charles(Donegal, E.)
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E.
Marks, G.Croydon(Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Molteno, Percy Alport
Mond, A.
Montgomery, H. G.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murray, James
Napier, T. B.
Nicholls, George
Nolan, Joseph
Norman, Sir Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, Kendal(TipperaryMid
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Grady, J.
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parker, James (Halifax)
Pearce, Robert (Staffs. Leek)
Pearson, W.H.M.(Suffolk, Eye)
Philipps, Col.Ivor(S'thampton)
Philipps, J.Wynford (Pembroke
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Price, RobertJohn(Norfolk, E.)
Priestley, W.E.B.(Bradford, E.)
Radford, G. H.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Richards, T.F.(Wolverh'mpt'n)
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, SirG.Scott(Bradf'rd
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rowlands, J.
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Scott, A.H.(Ashton under Lyne)
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Major J. B.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel

Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smith, F. E. (Liverpool, Walton)
Snowden, P.
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomasson, Franklin
Thompson, J. W. H. (Somerset, E
Thorne, William
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walsh, Stephen
Walton, Sir John L. (Leeds, S.)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Rt. Hn. E. (Clackmannan
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, Henry A.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
Whitbread, Howard
White, George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
White, Partick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Wiles, Thomas
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williamson, A.
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Winfrey, R.
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Young, Samuel

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt Hn. A. J. (City Lond.)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. H. M.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Coates, E. Feetham (Lewisham)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Craik, Sir Henry
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fell, Arthur
Fletcher, J. S.
Forster, Henry William
Gretton, John
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Helmsley, Viscount
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hon. Col. W.
Keswick, William
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Lockwood, Rt. Hn. Lt.-Col. A. R.
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Dublin, S.)
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Meysey-Thomson, E. C.
Middlemore, John Throgmorton
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Morpeth, Viscount
Nicholson, Wm. G. (Petersfield)
Nield, Herbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Percy, Earl
Rawlinson, John Frederick Peel
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Ronaldshay, Earl of
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sheffield, Sir Berkeley George D.
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Hon. Arthur (Ormskirk
Starkey, John R.
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Tennant, Sir Edward (Salisbury)
Thomson, W. Mitchell- (Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Warde, Col. C. E. (Kent, Mid)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Younger, George

Tellers for the Noes—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to a Standing Committee.

EVICTED TENANTS (IRELAND) [EXPENSES].

Committee to consider of authorising the payment, out of moneys provided by Parliament, of compensation and expenses incurred under any Act of the present session to facilitate the provision of land for certain evicted tenants in Ireland, and for other purposes connected therewith, and of authorising the National Debt Commissioners to make advances for the purposes of such Act (King's Recommendation signified), To-morrow.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

And, it being half-past Eleven of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Adjourned at twelve minutes before Twelve o'clock.

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX I.

PUBLIC BILLS

DEALT WITH IN VOLUME CLXXVII.

Those marked thus * are Government Bills. The figures in parentheses in the last column refer to the page in this volume. "[H.L.]" following title indicates that the Bill originated in the House of Lords.

(A.) HOUSE OF LORDS.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress
Advertisements Regulation	*Lord Balfour of Burleigh*	Read 2^a 9th July (1296)
*British North America	*Earl of Elgin*	Read 1^a 1st July (272) Read 2^a 2nd July (496)
*Imported Watch Cases	*Earl Granard*	Read 1^o 3rd July (651)
Injured Animals Act (1894) Amendments	*Lord Aberdare*	Read 1^a 1st July (272)
Limited Partnership [H.L.]	*Lord Avebury*	Read 2^a 2nd July (494) Committee 10th July (1571)
Prohibition of Medical Practice by Companies [H.L.]	*Lord Hylton*	Read 3^a and passed 3rd July (649)
*Qualification of Women (County and Borough Councils) [H.L.]	*Earl of Crewe*	Committee 4th July (817)
Qualification of Women (County and Town Councils) (Scotland) [H.L.]	*Lord Hamilton of Dalzell*	Read 1^o 8th July (1040)
Registration of Firms [H.L.]	*Lord Brassey*	Read 1^a 9th July (1295)
*Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries [H.L.]	*Earl Carrington*	Committee 2nd July (487)
*Territorial and Reserve Forces	*Earl of Portsmouth*	Committee 8th July (1040) Committee 9th July (1298)

(B.) HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
*Australian States Constitution	*Mr. Churchill*	Read 2° 28th June (242)
Ballot Act (1872) Amendment	*Mr. Dunn*	Read 1° 3rd July (720)
Bankruptcy (Scotland)	*Mr. Cleland*	Read 1° 4th July (888)
*British North America	*Mr. Churchill*	Committee Report Read 3ª and passed 27th June (208)
*Evicted Tenants (Ireland)	*Mr. Birrell*	Read 1° 27th June (124) Read 2° 8th July (1182)
*Evidence (Colonial Statutes)	*Mr. Churchill*	Read 2° 28th June (247)
*Finance	*Mr. Asquith*	Committee 1st July (378) (462) Committee 2nd July (543) (629) Committed 3rd July (724) Committed 9th July (1449)
*Imported Watch Cases	*Mr. Kearley*	Report Read 3° and passed 2nd July (648)
Injured Animals Act (1894) Amendment	*Sir H. Vincent*	Report Read 3° and passed 28th June (267)
Land Values (Scotland)	*Mr. Thos. Shaw*	Read 2° 10th July (1625)
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors (Contents)	*Mr. Richardson*	Read 1° 9th July (1446)
*Statute Law Revision [H.L.]	*Sir John Walton*	Read 1° 28th June (212)
*Telegraph (Money)	*Mr. Sydney Buxton*	Read 2° 28th June (212)
Unemployed Workmen	*Mr. J. Ramsay Macdonald*	Read 1° 9th July (1446)
University of Durham	*Mr. Hills*	Read 1° 9th July (1446)

APPENDIX II.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, SESSION 1907.

LIST OF RULES, ORDERS, &c., which have been presented during the Session, and are required by Statute to lie for an appointed number of Days upon the Table of the House.

In Continuation of List given in previous Volume.

Title of Paper.	Date from which the Period runs.	Period to lie upon the Table.
Board of Education (Code, 1907), — Copy of Code of Regulations for Public Elementary Schools, with Schedules, by the Board of Education [33 and 34 Vic., c. 75, s. 97]	1 July	One month
Sea Fisheries Regulation Act, 1888,—Copy of Order made by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, under the provisions of the said Act, for the variation of an Order for creating the Eastern Sea Fisheries District [51 and 52 Vic., c. 54, s. 1 (4)]	3 July	30 days
Shop Hours Act, 1904,—Copy of Order made by the Council of the County of Somerset, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the Hours of Closing for certain classes of Shops within the Parish of Twerton [4 Edw. VII., c. 31, s. 3 (3)]	3 July	40 days

INDEX

TO THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[AUTHORISED EDITION].

NINTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1907.

JUNE 27—*JULY* 10.

EXPLANATION OF ARRANGEMENT AND ABBREVIATIONS.

Bills: Read First, Second, or Third Time = 1R., 2R., 3R. [*c.*] = Commons. [*l.*] = Lords. *Amendt.* = Amendment. *Os.* = Observations. *Qs.* = Questions. *As.* = Answers. *Com.* = Committee. *Con.* = Consideration. *Rep.* = Report.

Where in the Index * is added with Reading of a Bill, or a Vote in Committee of Supply, it indicates that no Debate took place on that stage of the Bill, or on that Vote.

Subjects discussed in Committee of Supply are entered under their headings, and also under Members' Names, without reference to the actual Vote before the Committee.

Aberdeen Corporation Electricity Bill
  c. Rep. July 10,* 1587.

Aberdeen Corporation Order Confirmation Bill
  l. 1R.* *July 4,* 815.

Abraham, Mr. W. [Glamorgan, Rhondda]
  Income Tax Assessment of Sewers, *July 2,* 533.

Abyssinia
  Railway Extension in.
    Q. Mr. Bottomley; *A.* Sir E. Grey, *July 2,* 525, 526.

Adare
  Reinstatement Claim of J. Normoyle.
    Q. Mr. O'Shaughnessy; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *July 10,* 1593.

Adkins, Mr. W. R. [Lancashire, Middleton]
  Humber Conservancy Bill, 2R., *July 2,* 620–622.

Admiralty
  First Lord.—Rt. Hon. Lord Tweedmouth.
  Financial Secretary.—Rt. Hon. E. Robertson.
  Board, Constitution of.
    Os. Lord Tweedmouth, *July 4,* 834.
  Meat Contracts, Allocation of.
    Q. Mr. Field; *A.* Mr. E. Robertson, *July 8,* 1134.

Advertisements Regulation Bill
  l. 2R., *July 9,* 1296.

Africa, East
  [*See also Names of Places.*]
  Concessions granted—Return proposed.
    Q. Mr. J. C. Wason; *A.* Mr. Churchill, *July 8,* 1155.
  Condition of
    Appointment of Commission to Investigate and Report on, proposed.
      Os. Lord Hindlip, *June 27,* 8–14, 30; Earl of Mayo, 14–20; Earl of Elgin, 20–28; Marquess of Lansdowne, 28–30.
    Papers Relating to—Tabling.
      Os. Lord Hindlip, *June 27,* 8, 14.
  Delagoa Bay—Arrest of British Indians.
    Q. Sir W. Bull; *A.* Sir E. Grey, *July 10,* 1594, 1595.
  Education of Natives, Grant made to Missionary Societies.
    Os. Earl of Elgin, *June 27,* 27.
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Sir J. Walton

Attorney-General for Ireland

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Lord Lieutenant—Earl of Aberdeen.

Attorney-General—Rt. Hon. R. R. Cherry.

Solicitor-General—Mr. R. Barry.

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